

# Inked

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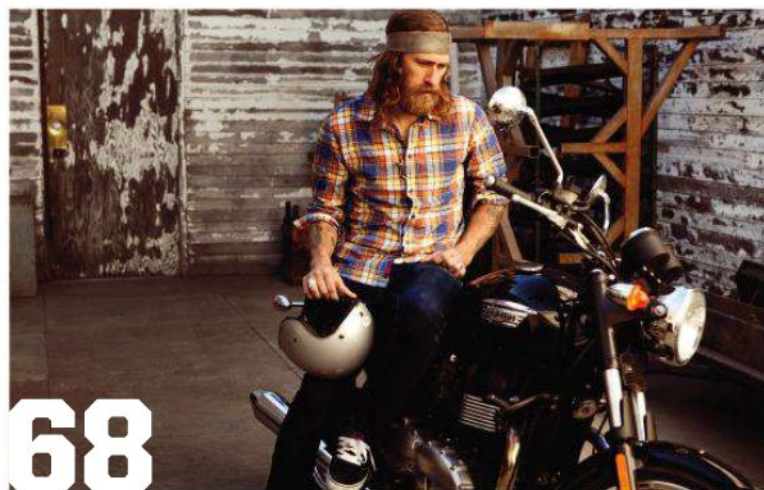
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On the cover: JESSE LEE DENNING photo by WARWICK SAINT; stylist: MEGAN ROSS; hair: NOAH HATTON for redken/cutler at kramer + kramer; makeup: HECTOR SIMANCAS for M.A.C at jump; retouching: ANTHONY MORROW; location: ROOT BROOKLYN. Motorcycle: Harley-Davidson Iron 883. Maison Close thong; Calvin Klein thigh-highs.

# 2011

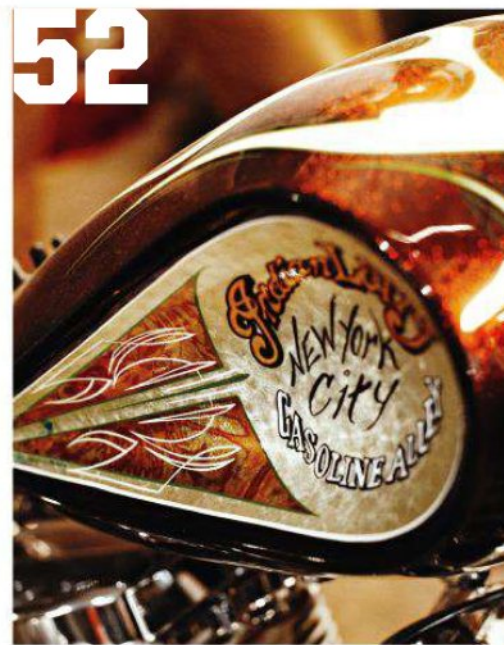
WeActivist SHELLY ZANDER  
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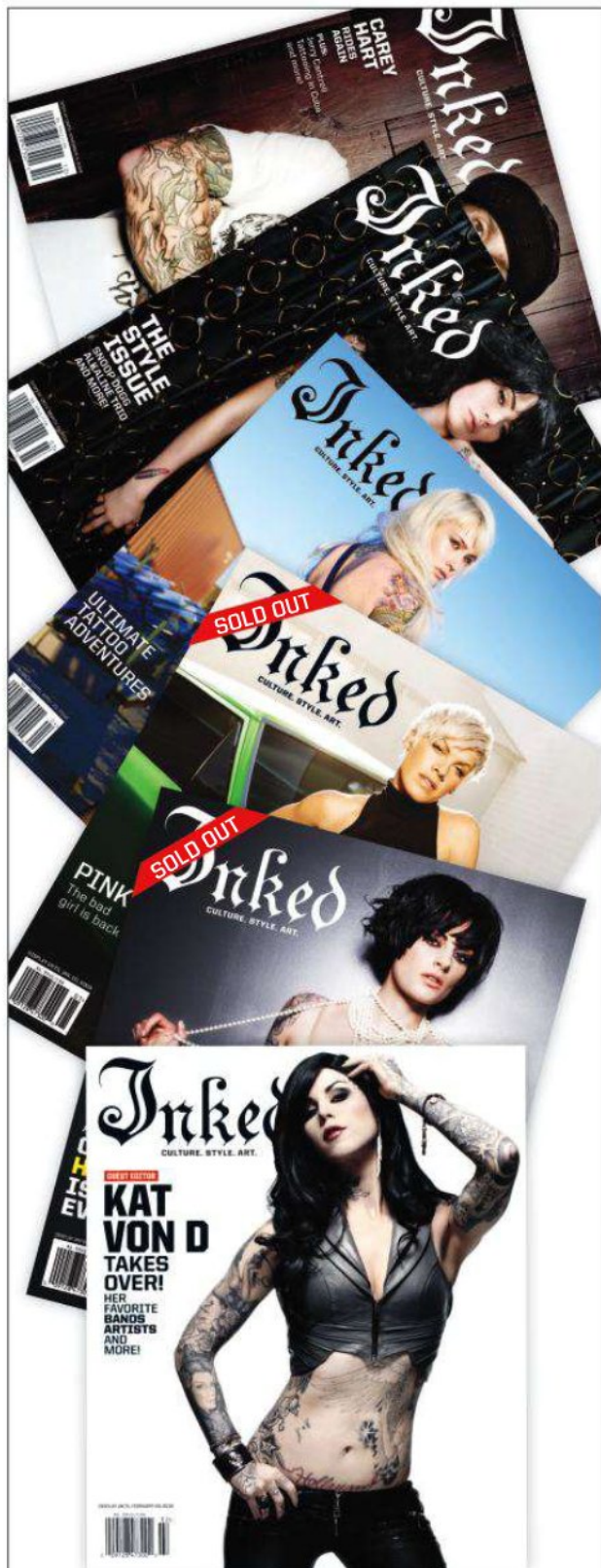


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# Inked

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# Inked

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LOS ANGELES



# ink well



A little more than 100 years ago, horses were the main means of transportation in the United States; families had carts or stagecoaches and rogues rode in the saddle (the 100,000 horses in New York City dropped about 2.5 million pounds of manure on the city streets each day—and people are concerned about carbon emissions). But once the internal combustion engine became affordable, cars and minivans replaced the equine, and rebels like James Dean and Evel Knievel hopped on motorcycles. In celebration of the most individualistic mode of transportation (until we all get jet packs!) we present our Motorcycle Issue.



Bridging the gap between one of America's most iconic motorcycle enthusiasts and the fabricators upholding his name, writer Willie G. (1) and photographer Michael Rubenstein (2) spent a few days at Indian Larry's shop in Brooklyn, NY. Peter Gerstenzang (3) profiles one of the top dogs in modern motorcycle design, Roland Sands; Greg Manis (4) pairs up a two-wheeler and a tattooed cutie for My First Ink; and photographer Magda Wosinska (5) highlights the style of biker boys.



Takahiro "Horitaka" Kitamura (6) of State of Grace Tattoo in San Jose talks philosophy with Japanese master Shige. We also sent writer Lani Buess (7, left) to profile Three Kings Tattoo in Brooklyn where her girlfriend Jes Irwin (7, right) is the shop manager. And Bob Croslin (8) shot A Day to Remember in anticipation of their impressive summer concert tour.



There's a saying that you're either a show pony or a workhorse, but we like to think of our magazine, the motorcycles featured in this issue, and you, our readers, as both. So ride hard, ride proud, and for fuck's sake put on a helmet.



Rocky Rakovic  
Editor  
editor@inkedmag.com

# STRAY FROM THE HERD



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# mail



## SEX, ISSUE

I used to visit the bookstore every month just to get my copy of INKED. For Christmas I was so excited to receive a subscription to your magazine. Then I received "The Sex Issue" in the mail. For years I read articles about tattoos, everyday people, celebrities, and different cities and shops. Now I was faced with absolute garbage. If I wanted to read sexually explicit material, I would have purchased *Hustler*. But I didn't. Unfortunately, my subscription lasts throughout the year. I won't be renewing. Money sadly wasted.

**Pamela Ford**  
Orillia, Ontario

*Editor's Note: Our February 2011 issue covered numerous everyday people, celebrities (Deadmau5, Lady Gaga, Mike Ness of Social Distortion), a city (Dallas), and a shop (Lost Art, in Salt Lake City). If the sexually explicit material you are referring to was the photographs of adult film stars, we are sorry that you think they are "absolute garbage." We prefer to think of them as people.*

## SOCIAL CLUB

I'm an old punk who has been antiquing for years. I thought I was the only tatted up Bad Larry in the game until I read about your trip with Social D's Mike Ness to the second-hand shops.

## facebook

### EVAN SEINFELD Q&A

**Jamie Alexandra Perdomo**

Ugh he's soooo lucky! Lupe Fuentes is fucking gorgeous! I'm a chick and I'm in love with her haha!

**Brenda Kowalew-Klammer**

ooh I love him! He was great in Oz and of course Biohazard!

### NSFW

**David Knox**

Hotter than a five dollar Rolex.

### SEX SURVEY

**Daniela Valdez**

Have you ever heard, "Once you go Inked you never go back?" Imao. My bf has tattoos & so did all my exes.

### SEX ISSUE

**Rodney Thomas**

By far the best issue, hope you guys have more like this one in the near future!



## READER OF THE MONTH

**AMY DYNAMITE**  
Bangkok, Thailand

Want to be a Reader of the Month?  
E-mail photos to [inkedgirl@inkedmag.com](mailto:inkedgirl@inkedmag.com)

When I walk into some of the joints I get crazy looks from the "antiques" running the store too—shit yeah!

**Earl "Dusty" Bockrath**  
Ypsilanti, MI

## SHOP TALK

I just wanted to pass on that I've been a fan of the magazine for a number of years, and that INKED was in fact one of the driving inspirations for the retail concept for Rebel Jeweler. The

mix of fashion, culture, ink, music, etc., is really well done. I used a lot of the older issues to work on this retail concept. And while I have seen a few other titles come and, it seems, go, no one else quite gets it like you guys do. So many thanks for all you have put together. It ended up making a pretty significant impact in my life.

**Tim Greve**  
Rebel Jeweler  
Portland, OR



**WRITE US.** Got something to say? Send all praise, notes of complaint, story suggestions, and other comments to [letters@inkedmag.com](mailto:letters@inkedmag.com). All submissions should include the writer's name and address. Letters may be edited for clarity, length, and content. **Also join the party at [facebook.com/inkedmag](http://facebook.com/inkedmag).**

# INKED LIFE

SPEND. GROOM. RIDE.



## MY FIRST INK

**Name:** Karen Jarman

**Occupation:** bartender, cocktail waitress, voiceover artist, and culinary school student

**Hometown:** Market Harborough, England

My first tattoo was a terrible black dragon on my lower back. My cousin's friend took me to get it done at a shop in Edmonton, Canada; I don't remember the name. Essentially, I got it because I really, really wanted a tattoo. In an attempt, I think, to a) find an explanation for it to tell my mum, and b) give some meaning to it for myself, I'd decided it somehow expressed my Asian side, since it's an Oriental dragon. My mum wasn't as upset about it as I thought she'd be, nor was anyone else too taken aback either. My friends had come to expect that sort of thing of me, since I was the weird one. Even my *Ah Koong* [grandfather] said it was beautiful! I definitely put a lot more thought into my tattoos these days. My next piece is a work in progress on my left arm by Tim Kern at Tribulation in New York. I'm going to extend it up my arm with some windmills and orchids.

PHOTO BY GREG MANIS

STYLIST: ALLISON MILLER; MAKEUP: CHRISTINE CHERBONNIER; HAIR: DAVID COLVIN FOR ARROJO; LOCATION: ROOT BROOKLYN; VESPA: LX 150 I.E.; CLOTHING: AMERICAN APPAREL UNDERWEAR; MODEL'S OWN HEELS

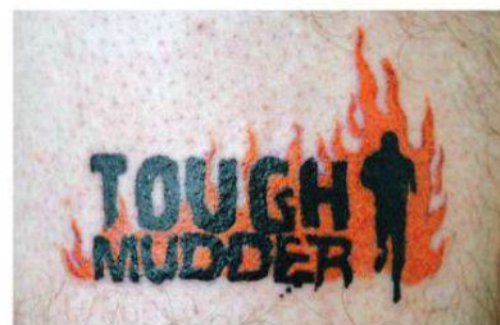


## MARK OF THE VAMPIRE

Kristin Bauer van Straten, the actress who plays saucy and sultry vampire Pam De Beaufort on *True Blood*, has been giving her new arm piece the light of day. When she first debuted the work of Los Angeles tattooer F. Kirk Alley, fans wondered if Pam would then get a tattoo on the show. But according to [trueblood-online.com](http://trueblood-online.com), Bauer van Straten tweeted about sitting in the show's makeup room while having it covered up.

## ICE CREAM MAN

Rapper Gucci Mane recently got his face tattooed with a three-scoop ice-cream cone shooting lightning bolts that's topped with an onomatopoeic *Brr* on the cone. The rapper's spokesperson has said the image is "a reminder to fans of how he chooses to live his life. 'Cool as ice ... I'll make ya say *Brr*.'" Another celebrity with a face tattoo, Mike Tyson, commented on DJ Whoo Kid's radio show, "Ya know, I like going to war, he likes being licked on."



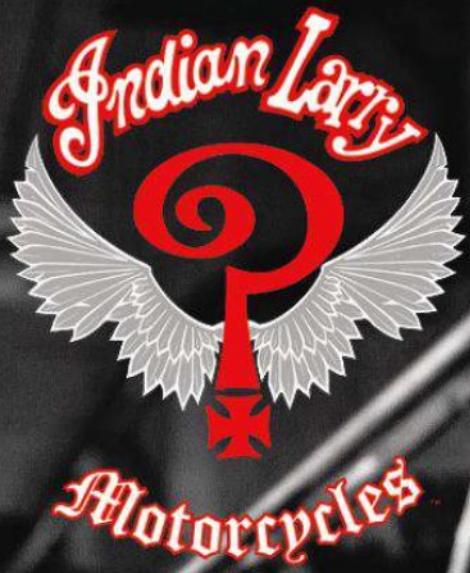
## ONE TOUGH MUDDER

Have you ever seen *Ninja Warrior* on G4? The Tough Mudder events company replicates a similar kind of experience with their endurance-style races in which participants must scale walls, traverse monkey bars, and do other crazy shit the organizer cooks up, like running through a field of live wires, some of which carry 10,000 volts. So what can you walk away with if you finish the race? Bruises, your giant balls, and a tattoo of the Tough Mudder's logo (if you donate \$100 to the Wounded Warrior Project, which provides programs and services to severely injured service members). The next event takes place in Allentown, PA, on April 9–10. Find out more at [toughmudder.com](http://toughmudder.com).



## HEALING THROUGH INK

This past New Year's Eve, artist Kaos, of P66 Tattoo in Denver, set out to break the current Guinness World Record for number of tattoos done in 24 hours (801, completed by Hollis Cantrell in November 2008). Kaos was only charging \$10 a pop, with all proceeds going to fight breast cancer. Although he fell a little short, completing only 656, we commend him for raising the money.



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When life gives us  
Lemos, we make  
lemon drops.



## THE CLEAR CHOICE

We have the most versatile spirit to thank for cocktail culture. Vodka, you're the best.

Vodka is the utility infielder of the liquor roster. Because the hooch is supposedly tasteless it can be mixed with anything (and it is), highlighting the mixer rather than the alcohol. For that reason, there's no need to wash out a \$40 bottle with orange juice or tonic—stick to the middle-of-the-road stuff. The drink-with-lunch crowd also like vodka because it's supposed to be odorless (but then again, tipsy people think they look amazing and are good dancers). Still, no matter what you believe, utilitarian vodka is a must for anyone throwing a get-together.

It's funny to think how relatively new vodka is to the States. Bourbon was king in America until the

1950s, when vodka escaped from the Eastern Bloc and lit up the nights of nuclear family matriarchs and patriarchs. Since then, the clear spirit has remained a fixture, gaining spikes of popularity thanks to James Bond and his shaken, not stirred, vodka martini and the gals in *Sex and the City* who washed down their banter with cosmos. But our favorite vodka drinker is Jay Kovar, the manager of The Old Town Ale House in Chicago, a newspapermen's bar back in the day. Allegedly, when a young Roger Ebert approached Kovar and asked why he drank vodka, Kovar answered flatly: "Sooner or later all the heavy hitters get to vodka." —Robert McCormick

## COCKTAIL CONVERSATION

A chat with Milay Lemos of  
The Vagabond in Miami.

**INKED:** How would you describe The Vagabond?

**MILAY:** It's one of the most original and eclectic nightclubs currently operating in Miami, a reservoir of mixed music genres, cultures, and people that offers a unique experience on any given night.

**What's the clientele like?** Quite diverse. There really is no stereotype. Generally it's a range of urban, professional, young, old, gay, straight, and just down-to-earth people.

**Does the tattooed crowd hang out here?** Absolutely.

**What's the Miami tattoo scene like?** It blew up after the show *Miami Ink* aired. Before the show there were a handful of ink shops on South Beach. Now you can find one practically every few blocks, and you see people with tattoos much more frequently.

**You've got some nice ink.** Thanks. I'm really into soft, realistic tattoos and also traditional Japanese. What I love about [my artist] Kore [Flatmo]'s style is that he can incorporate both those elements.

**What are your thoughts on vodka?** It's one of my favorites because it's so versatile and can be used in a lot of recipes. Sobieski is one of the best vodkas I've tried—it makes a really smooth martini.



### MILAY'S PINEAPPLE GINGER MARTINI

1½ oz Sobieski vodka  
¾ oz ginger liqueur  
¾ oz pineapple juice  
Shake it up with ice, strain, and serve.



### FLAVOR FAVES

There's a time and place for flavored vodka; unfortunately, for bubble gum and blueberry, it's never and nowhere. But some flavored vodkas enhance drinks better than others—like the amazing Effen Cucumber, which complements a dry martini or gibbon.



### STRAIGHT VODKA, NO CHASER

There are so many different vodka brands because it's quick to make; unlike bourbon, vodka has no aging process. Thus, there's a lot of crap on shelves. If you drink vodka without a mixer (like a champion), grab Poland's Sobieski or Iceland's Reyka.





*There's no way like the American way.*

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Clockwise from top:  
Topsy-Turvy Times  
of Cockamamie  
Mumbo Jumbo; Stain  
on Lemon Yellow;  
the Claytons; the  
Claytons' studio.



## OH BROTHER, WHERE ART THOU?

The Claytons are bound by blood, paint, and ink.

Rob and Christian Clayton's world is filled with imagery of small vermin, an oversized hypodermic needle, and gas masks, but bright, electric colors and a sense of humor make their work seem uniquely upbeat. The Clayton Brothers, as they're known within the American outsider art movement, collaborate on large-scale mixed-media pieces and 3-D sculpture installations.

"The process kind of started because we share so much of our lives together," says Christian, the younger brother. "It seems like when we started to collaborate, our singular artist voice became amplified."

Both graduates of the Art Center College of Design, in Pasadena, CA, the Clayton brothers share a 1,000-square-foot studio space in La Crescenta and have a unique approach to collaboration. Rob and Christian start each piece with no idea of the direction it will take. "We don't like knowing what it's going to be. We lose interest so fast if it's

that way," Christian acknowledges.

The brothers also work on everything separately. If Rob's stuck on a piece, he'll pass it off to his younger brother, and vice versa. "When I have that other mark on the image, it's like I'm looking at someone else's painting in a way, so that gets me going again," Christian says. "The main thing is whatever comes out of our studio is collaborative in the end."

"We were drawing on our arms at a young age—it was inevitable that we would get tattoos," says Christian, whose favorite tattoo is a drawing his brother did for him—an interpretation of the Woody Guthrie song "What Did the Deep Sea Say?" that's on the inside of his forearm. Rob's favorite tattoo is a Rose of No Man's Land done by Graham Chaffee from Purple Panther Tattoo in Los Angeles.

Though the brothers still create art individually, don't expect to see any of it. "We don't show it publicly," says Rob. "It just seems like something's missing." —Kara Pound



*“Four wheels move the body.  
Two wheels move the soul.”*

*Author Unknown*



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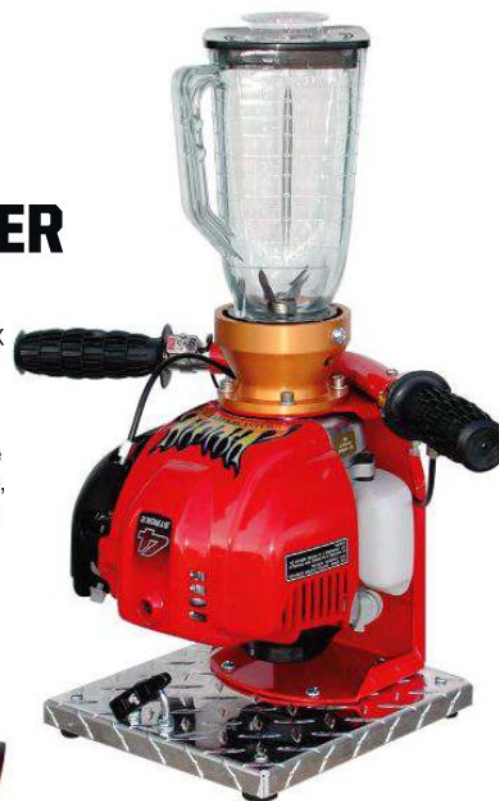
## BURN AFTER E-MAILING

Temple makes a laptop sleeve (\$79, templebags.com) that cloaks your computer like it's a missive sent during World War II, complete with a 1930s- or 1940s-era European or American stamp. Don't let it fall into the wrong hands.



## GAS GUZZLER

Grip this and rip a daiquiri: The Blenderblaster GX (\$449, blenderblaster.com) uses a four-cycle Honda gas engine to crush ice, pulse, frappe—whatever. Just take it out of the garage (because of the exhaust).



## NOW THAT'S A KNIFE

From the great tradition of hobos fashioning shanks out of railroad spikes, Bronks makes a handy cutting tool (\$200, bronksknife.com) out of the same thing. Look out, Boxcar Willie.



## WE LOVE LAMP

After ripping apart a bike in his off-time, art director John Ryland noticed that some of the parts on the ground of his garage would make cool lighting stands. Now he and his wife, Betsy, sell lamps made from motorcycle springs, shock absorbers, brake rotors, and transmission gears through their Etsy store (\$150, etsy.com/shop/betsyryland).



## YOU'RE WITH ME LEATHER

With its soft but tough leather and overall badassery, Schott NYC's Lightweight Waxy Cowhide Fitted Motorcycle Jacket 626 (\$480, schottnyc.com) is like our second skin.

# HART AND HUNTINGTON



MIKE ROCHE

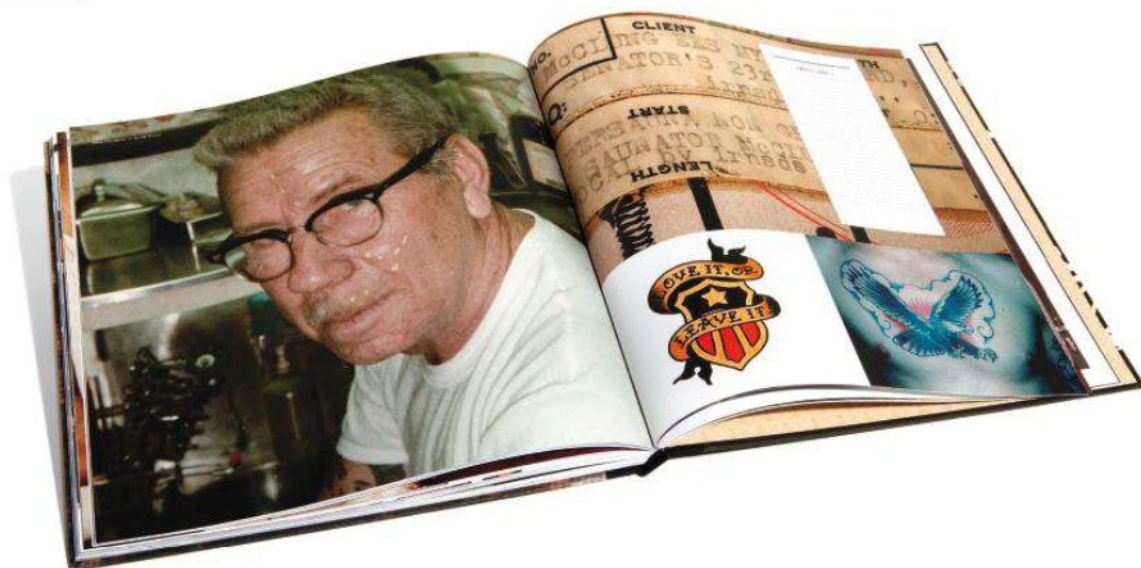
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# INK • ROCK • MOTO

PHOTO COURTESY: SEAN HARTGROVE



## BOOKS



## THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

His work certainly speaks for itself, but the folks at Sailor Jerry still wanted to tell the complete story of Norman Collins. Now they have, in *Homeward Bound: The Life and Times of Hori Smoku Sailor Jerry*. Norman "Sailor Jerry" Collins revolutionized traditional

bold-line American tattooing from his small shop in Honolulu's Chinatown district amidst brothels and gin joints, and this coffee-table book is published in honor of his 100th birthday. The result is part portfolio, part biography, part tattoo history

book, and part chronicle of the vices that palpitated through Hawaii during World War II. There are plenty of cool anecdotes contained within (including Jerry's awesome "purple ink" story), but here's one that shows how tough he was—and fits in with this issue's other bike stories: After suffering a heart attack at the local motorcycle dealership, he woke up on the pavement alongside his Harley, kick-started the motorcycle, and drove home. —Rocky Rakovic

## MOVIES



### SCREAM 4

After a recent onslaught of '80s horror remakes and reboots, it seems we've moved on to a '90s revival of sorts. The highly successful *Scream* franchise is back! It's been 11 years since Ghostface slashed his last throat, and Wes Craven, the director of the original trilogy, is back along with the lone survivors of the original bloodbath: Sidney Prescott (Neve Campbell), Sheriff Dewey (David Arquette), and Gale Weathers (Courteney Cox). It's like 1996 all over again—dope! —Gilbert Macias



### SOURCE CODE

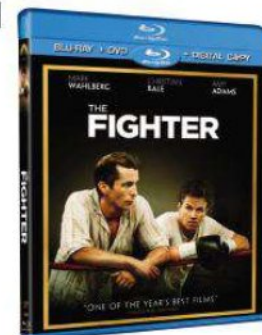
*Source Code* is an action-thriller about soldier Colter Stevens (Jake Gyllenhaal), who wakes up in the body of an unknown man on a Chicago commuter train. As events unfold and the train explodes, killing all onboard, he discovers that he's part of government experiment that allows him to inhabit another man's identity during the last eight minutes of his life. Stevens must now relive that memory over and over again until he discovers who the bomber is so he can prevent the attack. —G.M.



### YOUR HIGHNESS

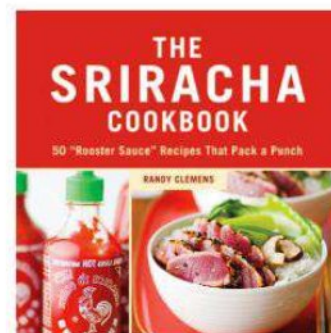
In this epic fantasy-adventure-comedy, the valiant Prince Fabious (James Franco) embarks on a journey to save his beloved Belladonna (Zooey Deschanel) from the evil wizard Leezar (Justin Theroux). Joining Fabious are his boozing and bungling younger brother, Prince Thadeous (Danny McBride), and Isabel (Natalie Portman)—a hot lone warrior with an agenda of her own. McBride co-wrote the script, so it's no wonder it looks like *The Princess Bride* on crack. —G.M.

## DVD



### THE FIGHTER

Now available on a loaded Blu-ray/DVD combo is this uplifting drama about professional boxer "Irish" Micky Ward. Christian Bale delivers a tour de force performance as older brother Dicky Eklund that earned him the Golden Globe for Best Supporting Actor and an Oscar nomination. You'll dig some of the special features, including the making-of documentary *The Warrior's Code: Filming the Fighter* and *Keeping the Faith*, the true story of Micky and Dicky as told by their family and friends. —G.M.



## HOT OFF THE PRESS

If we were asked to name our three favorite liquids, they would be booze, hot sauce, and tattoo ink, in no particular order. So we were pumped for *The Sriracha Cookbook*. If you haven't ever had the pleasure of the Thai-style chili sauce, you are living life incorrectly; we put the stuff on noodles, pizza, chicken, burgers, soup, etc. The problem with *The Sriracha Cookbook* is that it only really contains recipes to put Sriracha on chicken, burgers, soups, etc. —Robert McCormick



Steve Soto



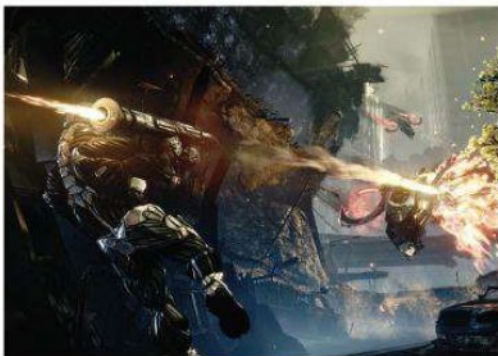
Steve Soto's  
"Querida Muerta"

## VIDEO GAMES

**MORTAL KOMBAT**

PLATFORM: PLAYSTATION 3, XBOX 360

The brutal brawler that dominated arcades and enraged PTA committees in the mid-'90s is back. After a series of offshoot titles that failed to gain widespread acceptance, series creator Ed Boon's new outfit, NetherRealm Studios, is going back to what they do best—making fighters bleed and players wince. The new Mortal Kombat captures the ultra-violent essence of the original trilogy: frenetic fisticuffs, blood-splattering body damage, and wince-inducing fatalities that test the limit of tastefulness and make you question the psychiatric state of the game creators. Familiar faces like Raiden and Sub-Zero return, and if you string together a devastating combo you can unleash a new X-ray move that zooms in to your opponents' anatomy to give you a front-row seat to the bone-shattering blow. **Classy. Play if you like:** *Bloodsport, GWAR* —Matt Bertz

**CRYSIS 2**

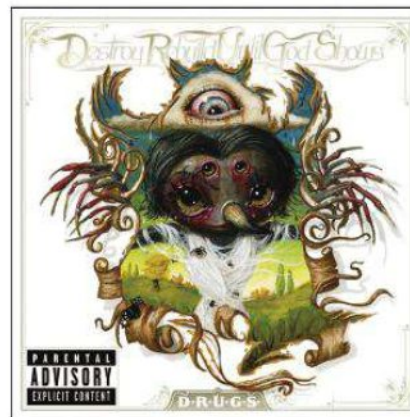
PLATFORM: PLAYSTATION 3, XBOX 360, PC

If you thought today's New Yorkers were assholes, wait until you meet the city's new denizens. Crysis 2 opens in the year 2023 with the Big Apple in tatters thanks to a devastating alien invasion. Armed with a second-generation Nanosuit that allows you to redirect its power to give you super speed, super strength, super vision, and cloaking abilities, you're the Robo-Giuliani tasked with cleaning up the streets. Powered by the breathtaking CryEngine 3, console owners can now experience Crytek's critically acclaimed sandbox shooter. You can also put your newfound Nanosuit skills to the test with the revamped online multiplayer that features six modes, 12 maps, 80 ranks, and 60 unlockable Nanosuit upgrades. **Play if you like:** *Predator, War of the Worlds, Far Cry* —M.B.

**MOTORSTORM: APOCALYPSE**

PLATFORM: PLAYSTATION 3

The end is near! Why spend your last days sipping canned soup in a bunker when you could join the thrill-seekers in MotorStorm: Apocalypse and ditch your last rites for a last ride through a collapsing city? Once you choose your ride from a selection of muscle cars, monster trucks, and super bikes, the only thing that stands between you and the finish line is the catastrophic natural disasters that significantly alter the racetrack as you burn through laps. With 40 races and a new challenge mode that allows you to customize the racing experience by cherry-picking the hazards, adrenaline junkies have several options for winding down their last days. Unbuckle your seat belt, turn up the tunes, and step on the gas. **Play if you like:** *Twister, Split/Second* —M.B.

**THE Inked PLAYLIST**

BY JONAH BAYER

**D.R.U.G.S.****"If You Think This Song Is About You, It Probably Is"**

Former Chiodos frontman Craig Owens successfully channels his rage.

**BRITISH SEA POWER****"We Are Sound"**

The terms *high energy* and *indie rock* don't have to be mutually exclusive.

**RIVAL SCHOOLS****"Eyes Wide Open"**

These post-hardcore icons are still ahead of the game.

**CAGE THE ELEPHANT****"Shake Me Down"**

Meet the successors to the Flaming Lips' demented-pop crown.

**THE GODDAMN RATTLESNAKE****"Slow Down Romeo"**

Country music is not just for hillbillies.

**THE MIND SPIDERS****"Don't Let Her Go"**

Marked Men's Mark Ryan blesses the lucky masses.

**PANIC! AT THE DISCO****"The Ballad of Mona Lisa"**

Discover the catchiest chorus of 2011—thus far.

**THURSDAY****"Sparks Against the Sun"**

This cinematic masterpiece grows more powerful with each listen.

**COLD WAR KIDS****"Finally Begin"**

Indie icons transcend their roots and showcase their musical growth on this track.





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She's a bushwhacker.

## DON'T BE A FURRY

Nothing ruins a sweet back piece like some hair pushing through.

Even though it's a testosterone-charged, animalistic link to when men hunted dinner, excessive body hair's presence today shows the opposite sex you are behind the times. Just think who pops to mind when you picture hirsute guys: Robin Williams, Tom Jones, and Ron Jeremy—all of whom carry a look from the 1970s. A little trimming, maintaining, and grooming (do not call it "manscaping") can do more for your look than a gym membership. Just don't wax!

"The biggest mistake men make is shaving it all off. This leads to inevitable cuts, breakouts, a lot of extra work, and the occasional sliced nipple or such," says Mike Gilman, founder and CEO of The Grooming Lounge, in Washington D.C.

And keep in mind that you need to treat your skin after you've done your handiwork, as the aftermath of hair removal isn't pretty. "Men often forget to partake in the right type of upkeep after hair removal, and that can lead to skin irritation and ingrown hairs," says Shea Drasser, the lead skin therapist for skin care company Dermalogica. She suggests applying a product with salicylic acid, like Dermalogica's Post Shave Balm (\$26, [ultra.com](http://ultra.com)), to areas that you've recently trimmed, shaved, or waxed to keep the hair follicles clear and prevent purulent ingrowns.

And now that you've read this and are visualizing sliced nipples and pus, you're getting the idea how disturbing it is for women to see thick chest hair pushing above a collar. —Melanie Rud



### BEST FOR DOWN THERE: MANGROOMER PRIVATE BODY SHAVER

Don't ever consider taking a regular razor to your wedding tackle; an electric shaver like this one (\$40, [groominglounge.com](http://groominglounge.com)) used wet or dry is your best bet.



### BEST FOR NOSE AND EARS: PANASONIC NOSE AND EAR HAIR TRIMMER

While we are sure nose hair has biological value, most men seem to do fine without it. This trimmer (\$15, [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)) has the added advantage of doing the ears too.



### BEST FOR BACK AND CHEST: BACK & BODY GROOMER AND SHAVER

If *The 40 Year Old Virgin* scared you from waxing, use a body trimmer. This one (\$50, The Sharper Image) features an extension handle to help you tackle out-of-reach areas.



### BEST FOR EYEBROW(S): ACE DUAL ACTION TWEEZER

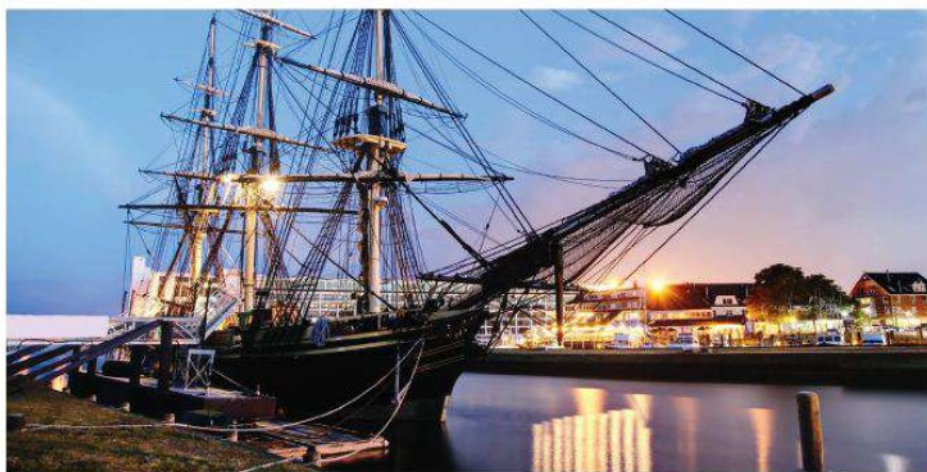
"Just cleaning up the stray hairs in between your eyebrows can make a huge difference," says Gilman. Split a unibrow with this (\$10, drugstores).



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## SALEM

This Massachusetts town has more to offer than just witch hunts and an amazing Halloween party.

Natan Alexander, the owner of Witch City Ink and Light-wave Tattoos, has been working as an artist since the early '90s. He's plied his trade in Amsterdam and helped legalize tattooing in Massachusetts, where he currently produces the Boston Tattoo Convention. In addition to tattooing, Alexander writes electronic and film music in his studio, collects rare books on the occult, and spends his mornings at the gym—so he's as well-rounded as his suggestions for things to do in the city. He also likes his work to pull from the light and dark sides of life: "I am equally at home depicting skulls and snakes or portraits of children and animals," he says. —Zac Clark



**BEST MUSEUM** While Salem's ship captains were out exploring the world in the early 18th and 19th centuries, "many of the treasures from the age of exploration found their way back to Salem and became the basis for this gem of a museum," Alexander boasts of the Peabody Essex Museum (161 Essex St.). The collection showcases how far and wide Salemites traveled—it even includes a tattooing tool one ship brought back from Tahiti.



**BEST COFFEE SHOP** Located behind the old historic town hall, Front Street Coffeehouse (20 Front St.) is Salem's trendy coffee spot. Forget Starbucks; they serve more than just caffeinated drinks and hot pick-me-ups. "They have great coffee and sandwiches in an intimate coffeehouse-gallery in the heart of downtown Salem," Alexander says. With a full juice bar, huge smoothie list, and pastries, it's ideal for a quick swing-by. Don't miss its cleverly named sandwiches, including The Poor Hillary (Clinton).

**BEST PLACE TO PLAY DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS** With an immense beer and wine selection, Gulu-Gulu Café (247 Essex St.) is sure to quench even the pickiest beverage snob's thirst. The café hosts a frequently rotating variety of local artists' work and is also home to weekly live music events. Wednesday nights is open mic night, a haven for the area's singer-songwriters. "The café definitely added a welcome home for the literary, film, art school, and/or 20-sided-dice-rolling types," Alexander says.



**BEST PLACE FOR LOBSTERS AND DOGS** Just reopening for the summer, The Lobster Shanty (25 Front St.) is a small restaurant that claims to have, "warm beer, lousy food, surly waitresses, rude bartenders, cranky cooks, and rowdy regulars." All that aside, they have succulent lobster rolls and a separate menu for your dog, who is also welcome in the eatery.



**BEST PLACE TO SUPPORT THE ARTS** "The galleries feature everything from paintings and sculpture to steampunk jewelry and handmade books," Alexander says of Salem's Artist Row (between New Derby St. and Front St.), open every year from April to November. It's also home to The Salem Arts Association, which decorates select shops, boutiques, and restaurants in town and runs classes and seminars that provide Salem with an amazing backdrop.

RENATO  
"BABALU"  
SOBRAL

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photo by: hulstein

## inked life | RIDE

The best bikes to ride this spring, clockwise from top right: Harley-Davidson Blackline Softail; Victory High-Ball; Ducati Monster 1100 EVO.



## GET YOUR MOTOR RUNNING

INKED presents the top motorcycles of the year.

It was one hell of a winter in the north, Midwest, and, of all places, north Texas, but it's time to pack away your puffy coat, throw on your leathers, and get on a motorcycle. And with so many new sweet rides hitting the pavement, there are plenty to choose from. Here are the best bikes of the riding season. Rip it up.

**HARLEY-DAVIDSON BLACKLINE SOFTAIL** Holy shit, this ride's understatement leaves us breathless. The good folks at Harley stripped away everything you don't need and ended up with an engineering work of art. It's a soft-tail but has the sick look of a hardtail, as they tucked the hydraulic rear suspension in the guts. In front they fashioned a split drag-style handlebar with a slammed speedo that positions you in a mean forward-riding position. Willie G. Davidson, the brand's chief styling officer, says the bike is "lean as wire, hard as iron, and dark as a tar road at midnight." He's not blowing exhaust smoke—this clean Hog is reminiscent of early bobbers.

**DUCATI MONSTER 1100 EVO** Somehow Ducati has managed to capture lightning in the throttle with its Monster line, and the new 1100 EVO has ramped up the electric-

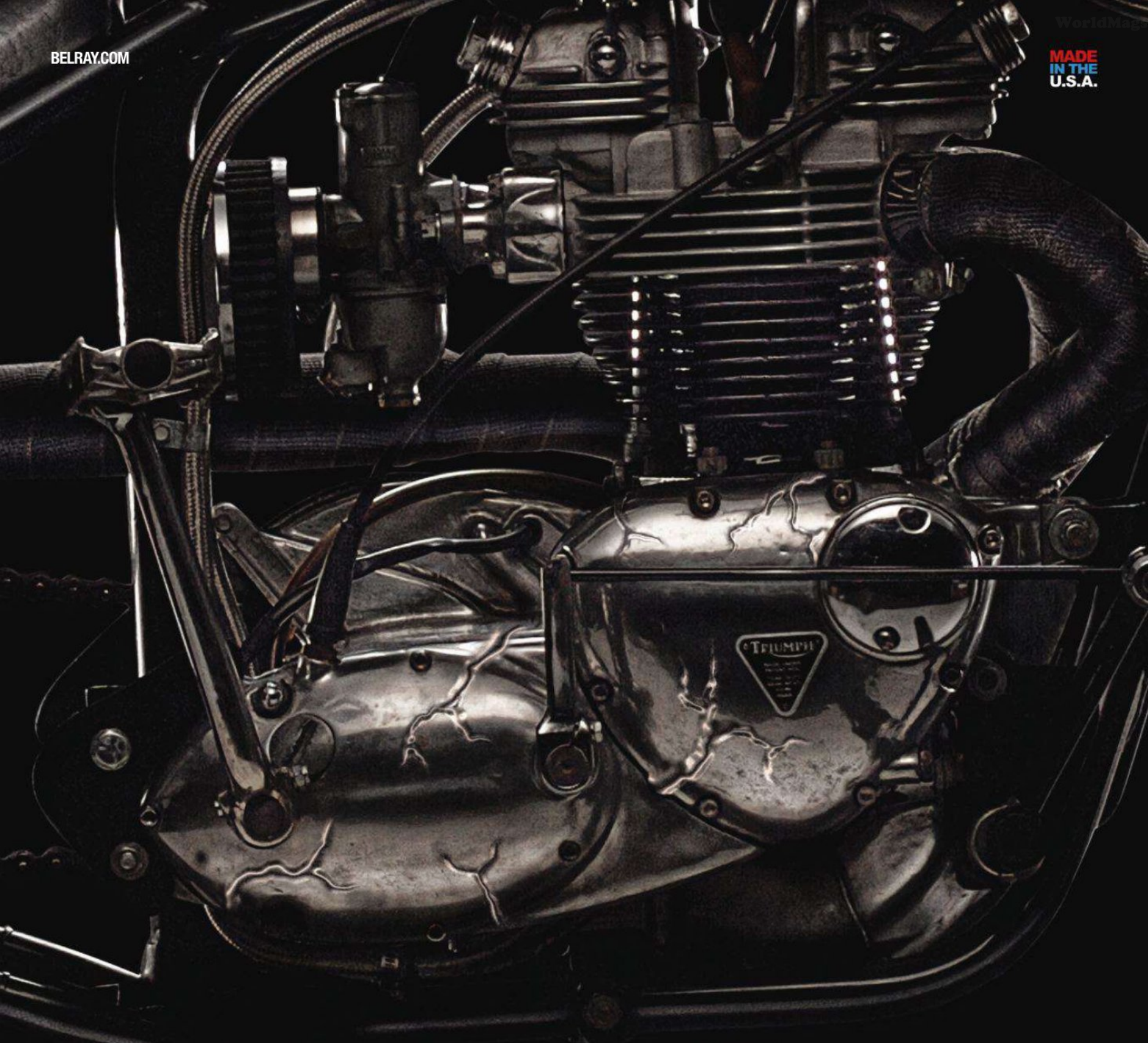
ity. It's practically weightless, thanks to a pared-down design, and has crazy amounts of torque. The look is also cooler than the 2010 model because they went with 10-spoke wheels rather than the five spokes they did last year. But what makes this motorcycle killer is that it's one of the first models with the new Ducati Safety Pack, which "consists of the ultra-dependable Brembo-Bosch ABS braking system and brand-new user-friendly four-level Ducati Traction Control." Meaning you can have fun with it and live to ride another day.

**VICTORY HIGH-BALL** We like the cut of Victory's jib; in company literature, this is how they describe the color choices: "The 2012 Victory High-Ball is available in one scheme: Matte Black with a white tank cove." They do their own thing, and they do it well. The High-Ball looks like a compact version of the Vegas model with the same amount of fun. The handlebars sit high but can easily be adjusted to a laid-back, lower position. It packs a Freedom 106/6 V-Twin with Stage 2 tuning for some giddy-up, and classy whitewall tires scream, "Look at me ... then get the fuck out of my way." —*Rocky Rakovic*

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# INKED PEOPLE

MOTORCYCLE DESIGNER. FASHION MAVEN. CHEF.

“Tattoos are the skin version of the motorcycle. They mean you’re an iconoclast.”  
—Roland Sands, motorcycle designer

PHOTO BY JOHN DOLE







# ROLAND SANDS

Many guys who design motorcycles get into it during their autumn years, after a long life of hard riding. But for 36-year-old Roland Sands, it was a near-death experience that coaxed him into fabricating. "Yeah, I did something stupid," says Sands. "I was racing my bike at Sears Point [in Sonoma County, CA] and tapped another guy going around a corner. We both crashed into the air fence at 120 mph. I punctured my lungs, broke some bones, and cracked my liver. You could say it was a pretty colorful way to exit the sport."

Sands relates this story in his trademark patter, which is a cross between mellow surfer and mordant mortician. Currently the owner of the über-hip Roland Sands Designs, in Los Alamitos, CA, this prize-winning designer was always a kid who took the corners fast. "I was around motorcycles a lot as a boy. My dad, Perry, was a championship racer. Mostly, though, I dug skateboarding, smoking weed, and tattoos. But I couldn't stop drawing pictures of bikes. When I couldn't race anymore, I thought, 'Maybe design is the next best thing.'"

RSD works with major motorcycle manufacturers, such as Ducati, Yamaha, and KTM, and designs motorcycles that are part sport bike, part chopper. Sands covets his tattoos for the same reason he loves his work: Both represent freedom, beauty, and unconventionality. "Tattoos are the skin version of the motorcycle," says the designer. "They mean you're an iconoclast. My first piece was the Japanese symbol for *speed* on my right shoulder. I've also got a board track race scene on my forearm, an Indian Hill Climber on my left arm, a skull racer on the inside of the left biceps, with an Avenging Angel on that biceps, too. Someday, I hope to get the Long Beach Bridge on my back connecting my shoulders."

Sands's freethinking business ideas are working just fine too. In addition to his corporate gigs, he does singular creations for other iconoclastic types, like the bike he's building for Mickey Rourke. "I'm making him something pretty unique, a cross between a Cafe Dragster and a Harley high-performance model," Sands says. "It also involves satin and some other unusual materials."

Although he's got other celebrity clients, Sands is too modest a cat to name-drop. Mostly, he's a dreamer, a searcher, and an inked-up philosopher. "I love what I do," he says. "But it's more than that. I'm always looking for symbolic bridges that connect my life and my work." Hopefully they're both far from done. —Peter Gerstenzang

## inked people

# MAYA A. LAKE

Before the *Always Sunny in Philadelphia* crew tried to hock “kitten mittens,” Maya A. Lake visualized putting gloves on a feline. “In college I had a dream that I had these mittens, and when I put them on this cat, she would stand up and box with me,” she says. “We toured the world as a novelty act.”

These days, Lake puts on a different type of exhibition, fashion shows, but she took the Boxing Kitten name for her line from that dream—and she’s kicking stylish ass.

Classic ladylike shapes from the '50s and '60s are canvases for Lake’s vibrant, bold prints. “Each season is inspired by different things. My current collection is inspired by the cult classic *Faster, Pussycat! Kill! ... Kill!*, which is about these three strippers in the desert who kidnap a couple and kill the boyfriend. The women are just crazy,” she says of her spring/summer 2011 offerings. And while previous seasons carried the spectrum of the rainbow, the black and white of the film inspired Lake to go back to basics. “Everyone kept asking me to do a solid, and [black and white] is as far as I’ll go.”

Lake might prefer color in her closet, but as far as her ink, her favorites are black and gray. The underside of her left forearm depicts an Our Lady of Guadalupe surrounded by roses, and on her left triceps there’s a vintage Singer sewing machine—a first for tattoo artist Mark Mahoney. “The Singer is based off of a couple different machines that Mark and I liked,” she says. “I’m obsessed with them. I have one that I still sew on and another I just keep around the house.” After telling Mahoney that she was thinking of filling in the rest of her arm, he asked Lake to bring in a sample of material to inspire the design. As for tattoos inspiring her work, she says, “I love pinup imagery. ... Though I probably won’t use tattoo designs for my collections, I am leaning toward using girls that are heavily tattooed with pinup styles that are kind of classic for some photo shoots.”

Lake’s designs have been seen on celebrities such as Beyoncé, Solange Knowles, Rihanna, and Fergie, to name a few. Of her high-profile fans, she says: “It’s really inspiring, and I think the women who have chosen to wear [the line] have been really reflective of what the brand is about.” —*Brittany Ineson*



## inked people

### Lizzie's Roasted Chicken

Recipe courtesy of Michael Symon

Serves 4

1 3- to 4-pound chicken  
 1 tbsp kosher salt  
 1 lemon, thinly sliced and seeded  
 2 fresh bay leaves  
 1 small onion, peeled  
 3 garlic cloves  
 1 small bunch fresh thyme  
 2 tbsp olive oil

A day before cooking, rinse the chicken inside and out under cold water and pat dry. Salt liberally, cover, and refrigerate. Remove the chicken from the refrigerator an hour before cooking. Preheat oven to 425°. Wedge 3 lemon slices and a bay leaf between the skin and each breast. Put the onion, garlic, thyme, and remaining lemon in the cavity. Rub the chicken with the olive oil, put it in an ovenproof sauté pan or roasting pan, breast side up, and roast until the thigh reaches 160° or the cavity juices run clear (about one hour). Let rest for 10 to 20 minutes, then cut into eight pieces and serve.

# MICHAEL SYMON

Cleveland has had a tough run. From time to time its river would catch on fire, and more recently, favored son LeBron James publicly dissed it by televising his “decision” to leave for Miami. But what Cleveland does have going for it is hope that this will be the Indians’ year (one can always hope) and one of the culinary world’s sharpest knives, Michael Symon.

Before he was an Iron Chef and host of the Food Network’s *Food Feuds*, Symon found fame in his hometown—although it almost wasn’t meant to be. After graduating from culinary school in New York, Symon had his eyes set on relocating to California, but thankfully for Cleveland, his mother intervened. “I have a Greek-Sicilian mother, so if you live more than five minutes away from her, that’s out of town,” Symon says. He returned home and met his wife, Liz Shanahan, at his first job. In 1997 they opened Lola, thus firmly planting roots in Cleveland. “I love it because it’s an honest town—there’s no bullshit here. They look you in the eye when they talk to you and they love and appreciate good food.”

While competing under the bright lights of Kitchen Stadium on *Iron Chef America*, it’s easy to get caught up and forget the primary goal: to make great-tasting food. “A mistake that some chefs coming in make is that they try and shock the world. Sometimes they forget that the most important thing about food is that it should taste great. You can have all the shock and awe, but if it

doesn’t taste great you’re going home.” Despite the program’s reputation for exotic secret ingredients like wild boar and ostrich, it’s the simpler ingredients that give Symon the most trouble. “It’s much easier to make the protein the star of the dish. When the ingredient is basil, you can only do so much shit with basil. If you put too much in the dish it’s going to overpower everything and nothing is going to taste good,” Symon warns.

On a recent trip to Voodoo Monkey Tattoo to get some work done, Symon saw artist Natalie Roelle doodling cherub pigs. Immediately he knew he needed to get them, so he put off the other tattoo he had planned and got pigs holding a banner that says “Got Pork.” The chef definitely sees a connection between cooking and tattoos. “In tattooing there is a thought process kind of like the [one that goes into the] food you make,” he says. “It becomes a part of you—it’s a personal expression.”

Entrées at Symon’s restaurants (the success of Lola allowed him to open other ventures, including Lolita, Roast, and B Spot) run the gamut from foie gras to fried bologna in order to offer something for the most intrepid foodie as well as those with less adventurous palates. So would he ever pull a LeBron and take his talents to South Beach? He laughs and says no. “It’s too humid and people wear their clothes entirely too tight.” —Charlie Connell



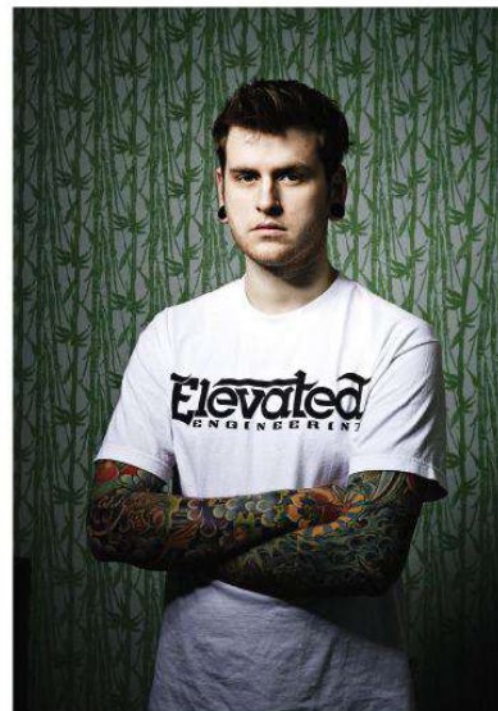
From left: Joshua Woodard, Neil Westfall, Kevin Skaff, Jeremy McKinnon, Alex Sheinutt.







“We didn’t get into this to make music videos and win awards and be millionaires. We just wanted to play shows, have a good time with people, and form a connection.”  
 —Kevin Skaff

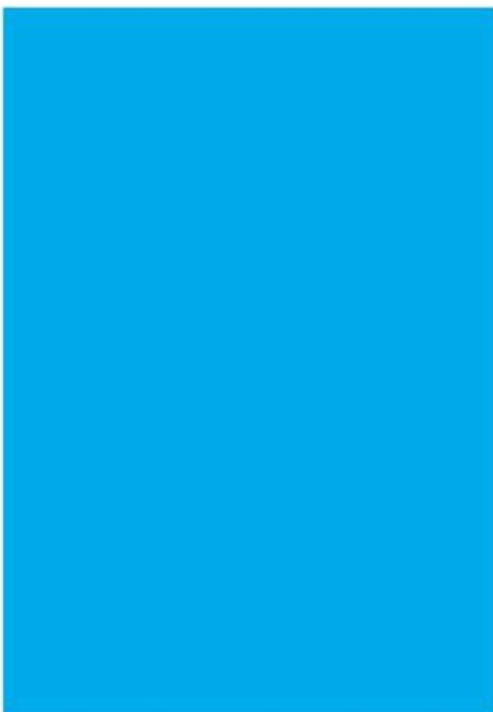
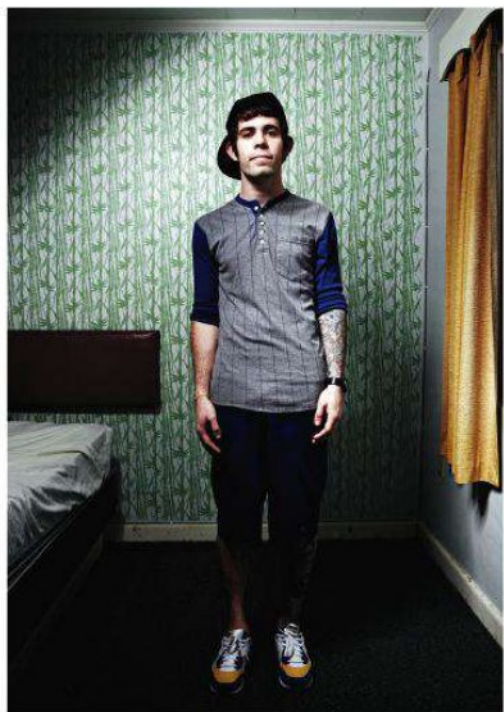
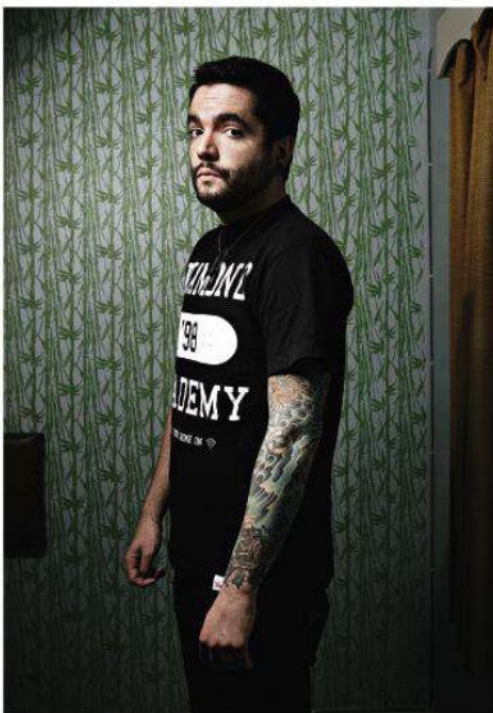
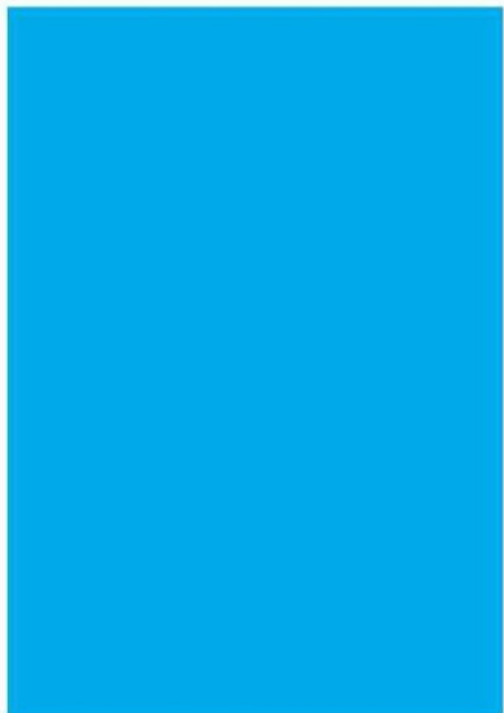


**LET'S FACE IT: THESE DAYS, THE AGGRESSIVE MUSIC** subculture is more heavily segmented than ever before. Kids aren't just into punk or hardcore, they're into metalcore, screamo, crabcore ... the list goes on and on. Standing stridently at the center of this saturated scene is A Day to Remember, a band who has successfully managed to sound metalcore, pop punk, emo, and post-hardcore at the same time without paying much attention to what everyone is doing. This process, which has gone on for the past eight years, recently culminated with the release of a fourth studio album, *What Separates Me From You*.

“A lot of bands today are put together and have people who write songs for them, so there's no story behind the band. I'm sure they've had life experiences but they don't write about it,” says guitarist Kevin Skaff when asked why so many fans have gravitated to A Day to Remember's music (*What Separates Me From You* debuted at number 11 on the *Billboard* 200 chart, selling more than 58,000 copies in the first week of its release last November). “I think kids like our music because we've been through so much as a band and we talk about both the hardships of the road and the fun stuff, so there are a lot of differ-

ent aspects of our music that anyone can relate to.”

Glancing at an upcoming itinerary that includes main stage appearances on the Vans Warped Tour and Bamboozle festivals, it must seem pretty breezy to be a member of A Day to Remember right now. Hell, while they were on tour last year the band flew out tattoo artist Craig Beasley (of Monument Tattoos in Tallahassee, FL) for two weeks so he could tattoo sleeves on Skaff, vocalist and guitarist Jeremy McKinnon, and drummer Alex Shelnett as well as a chest piece on guitarist Neil Westfall. However, it's important to keep in mind that the members of



A Day to Remember, which also features bassist Joshua Woodard, spent their formative years touring in vans, sleeping on floors, and trying to figure out how to get their music out to prospective fans.

"I remember going to band practice and telling the guys we needed to put our music up on the internet, and half of us agreed and the other half were more interested in sending demos to labels and trying to get signed," Westfall recalls with a laugh when asked how things have changed since the act's early days. "I was 15 years old when I joined this band and I'm 23 now, so I think the fact

we started out so young and spent all that time touring in a van and making that cult following at the lowest level is why a lot of our fans have stuck around and continued to support us."

Recorded in the band's hometown of Ocala, FL, and produced by Andrew Wade and New Found Glory guitarist Chad Gilbert (both of whom also worked with the band on 2009's *Homesick*), *What Separates Me From You* sees A Day to Remember stepping up their aggressive and melodic tendencies. During songs like "Sticks & Bricks," the listener feels like he's in a prison at one moment and

surfing the crest of a soaring pop anthem the next.

"I think we're really proud of the new CD because we really wanted it to sound pissed-off and convey those types of emotions, and I think that really comes across on these songs," Westfall says. "We wanted to write something that felt really real and raw."

Speaking of raw, when asked if the band has any memorable tattoo stories, Skaff harks back to the aforementioned experience last year when Beasley was trying to ink mind-boggling amounts of limbs during a two-week-long session on the road. "We were in San Diego playing at Soma, and I decided to get tattooed right before playing a show because that was the only time I had available," he recalls. "So I sat for six hours and got inked from my shoulder down to the middle portion of my forearm. We got the outline and half the shading done, and then [Beasley] put Vaseline all over it, cleaned it off, and I played a show." While Skaff says he was running so high on adrenaline during the gig he didn't feel the pain, he admits he definitely felt something after the show. When asked if he recommends this experience to anyone else he says, "absolutely not," with a laugh.

Westfall, who is such a hardcore Blink-182 fan that he proudly sports the band's name across his knuckles, has a similar anecdote about getting tattooed on the 2009 Vans Warped Tour. "We were in San Francisco and Oliver Peck was out tattooing, but he was really booked up so I came up to him and told him what I wanted and he said, 'Maybe I can fit you in now.' He drew up a gypsy head with a nurse hat and a banner that said *Mom* because my mom's a nurse. He had a dollar-sized tattoo designed and tattooed on my left leg in less than an hour," Westfall says, almost as if he can't believe it himself. "I'd say it was pretty insane."

When A Day to Remember is back home, the guys frequent shops like Ocala Tattoo & Piercing and Crawling Panther Tattoo, as well as Beasley's shop, but spending free time in Florida hasn't been a common occurrence lately. "We chose to tour this much because that's really the reason we wanted to be in a band to begin with," Skaff says. "We didn't get into this to make music videos and win awards and be millionaires. We just wanted to play shows, have a good time with people, and form a connection."

Having performed alongside everyone from death-metal-influenced acts like The Devil Wears Prada to pop-oriented icons like New Found Glory, A Day to Remember wears their individuality as a badge of honor. "Usually when we go on tour everyone either thinks we're too heavy or we're not heavy enough, but we think the fact that we don't fit in amongst a bunch of people who don't conform to regular society has helped us in the long run," Skaff says, adding that the band would rather burn out than stagnate.

"You either learn to swim or drown," Skaff summarizes when asked how A Day to Remember has remained so driven for nearly a decade. "If you don't keep up you're going to get left behind because the world's not going to wait for you." ■





# INKED GIRL

JESSE LEE  
DENNING



PHOTOS BY  
WARWICK SAINT

PAGE 43

**“I’VE ALWAYS BEEN A BIT OF AN ADRENALINE JUNKIE. I LOVE ANYTHING FAST AND THAT BECOMES AN EXTENSION OF THE DRIVER OR RIDER.”**

**T**he lovely Jesse Denning is a walking work of art—through God’s hands and the needles of tattoo artists. Her love for aesthetics runs deep, as she has worked in a number of New York City galleries, including Invisible NYC, the tattoo studio and art gallery she once owned a stake in. And as her impressive collection of ink attests, she appreciates art for art’s sake. “There are aspects to all periods, genres, and artists that I like—or that I can at least find interesting and certainly relevant in terms of a time line,” she says. “I have a soft spot for La Belle Époque, turn-of-the-century culture, arts, and literature. It was such a vibrant, progressive—yet sensual and transitional—period in terms of art and culture.”

But don’t scan her body looking for the work of period masters like Lord Leighton. While she has an eye for late-19th-century painting, she respects modern tattoo art as its own entity, in its own time. “Tattooing is an art in its own right with its own set of rules and imagery,” Denning says. “I wouldn’t necessarily take a painting or drawing to a tattooist and ask for it to be reproduced exactly as it is on paper on my body. I think it’s important to know how specific the art of tattooing is and that a tattoo artist should be allowed room for interpretation and the liberty to make sure the chosen image—or whatever piece—goes with the body. The body is a canvas unlike any other.” The artists she says have worked most on her skin are Andre Malcolm of FTW Tattoo and Jason Kundell of Art Work Rebels.

Denning is also as comfortable in a tattoo chair as she is on a motorcycle. “I love motorcycles!” she says. “I’ve always been a bit of an adrenaline junkie. At the age of 6 my dad taught me how to drive stick. I’d sit on his lap while he pressed the clutch and I changed gears and steered. I love anything fast and that becomes an extension of the driver or rider. I also love being on a bike and, at the risk of sounding cliché, feeling the wind in my hair.” —Robert McCormick

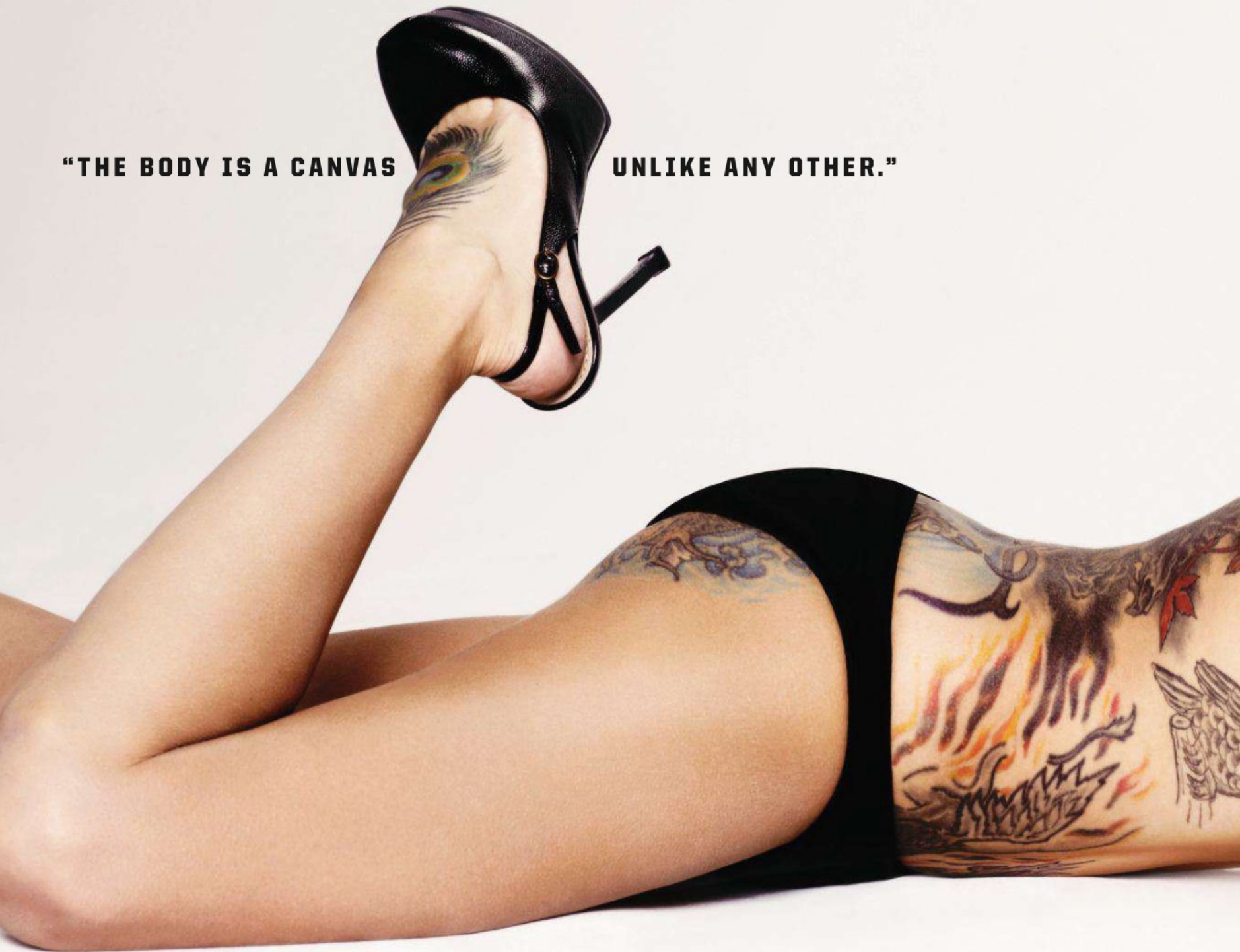




HARLEY

**“THE BODY IS A CANVAS**

**UNLIKE ANY OTHER.”**









Maison Close bra; American Apparel underwear; Yves Saint Laurent heels (throughout); Ruby helmet (throughout). Opposite: Maison Close bodysuit. Previous spread: American Apparel underwear. Page 45: Maison Close garter belt; Wolford thigh-highs. Page 42: Maison Close bra; American Apparel underwear.



**Hair:** Noah Hatton for Redken/Cutler at Kramer + Kramer  
**Makeup:** Hector Simancas for M.A.C at JUMP  
**Stylist:** Megan Ross  
**Retouching:** Anthony Morrow  
**Location:** Root Brooklyn  
**Motorcycle:** Harley-Davidson Iron 883

## FANTASTIC PLASTIC

Clockwise from top: Super by RetroSuperFuture dark olive sunglasses, 80spurple.com; O'Neill James purple sunglasses, shoponeillusa.com; Ray Ban Wayfarer light gray sunglasses, sunglasshut.com; Mykita Herbie tortoise sunglasses, mykita.com; John Varvatos V750 gray horn sunglasses, johnvarvatos.com; Metal Mulisha The Admiral black sunglasses, metalmulisha.com; Contego Eyewear The Kipling navy sunglasses, contegoeyewear.com.

# ROAD TRIPPIN'

Get ready for the long haul with shades and a lightweight jacket.

PHOTOS BY THOMAS LIGGETT





**SPRING BREAKERS**

Clockwise from top: YMC brown jacket, 617-267-0899; STPL color-block jacket, stapledesign.com; French Connection green jacket, select Bloomingdale's; Fred Perry duffle coat, 212-260-4770; Etnies gray jacket, etnies.com.



**WORK TOGETHER**

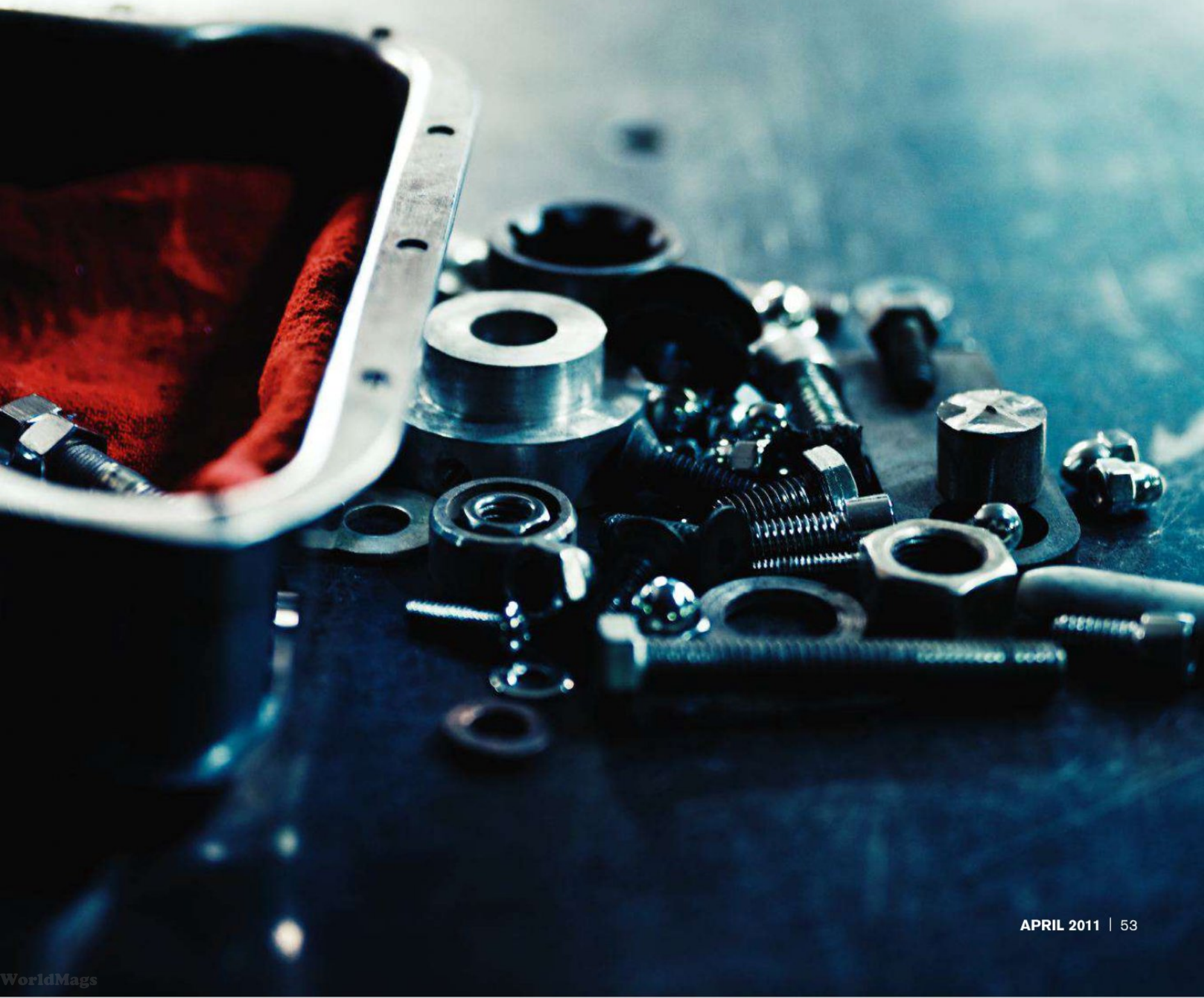
We've got the brains  
we've got the skill  
we've got the resources  
we've got the commitment  
Let's finish the job

**FINISH THE JOB**

# BROOKLYN BRIDGE

BY WILLIE G. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL RUBENSTEIN

When an accident took the life of motorcycle demigod Indian Larry, Bobby Seeger Jr. and company picked the wrench up off the floor of Larry's New York borough shop and have continued to uphold the Indian Larry name by producing the most sought-after American bikes in the world.





This page: Indian Larry.  
Opposite: Bobby Seeger Jr.

**IT'S A BITTER, DISMAL DAY IN THE OUTSKIRTS OF WILLIAMSBURG,** Brooklyn; the white stuff has hit New York City for the umpteenth time this winter, cloaking its streets in the imagery of a Charlie Sheen wet dream. Up and down the Union Avenue corridor, there's hardly a hipster in sight. But while most of the trendy neighborhood's residents sit home surfing for slouch beanies and skinny jeans, big things are going down on the block between Ainslie and Hope Streets—mind-blowing, downright sinister things.

Here, in an unassuming brick building, void of any character other than its graffiti-painted bay door, toils the crew of Indian Larry Motorcycles. Nobody on the small, dedicated staff has taken a snow day. After all, when you build 12 bikes a year from scratch, downtime is kind of a dirty word. Inside, the shop-slash-showroom is no-frills. The purposely unrefined abode is part factory, part man-cave, and 100 percent Americana in the most eccentric of ways. That is, of course, how its legendary founder would have wanted it. On the shop floor, trained craftsmen hone, chop, and polish with machinery from decades of yore, oblivious to any happenings not pertaining to the build at hand.

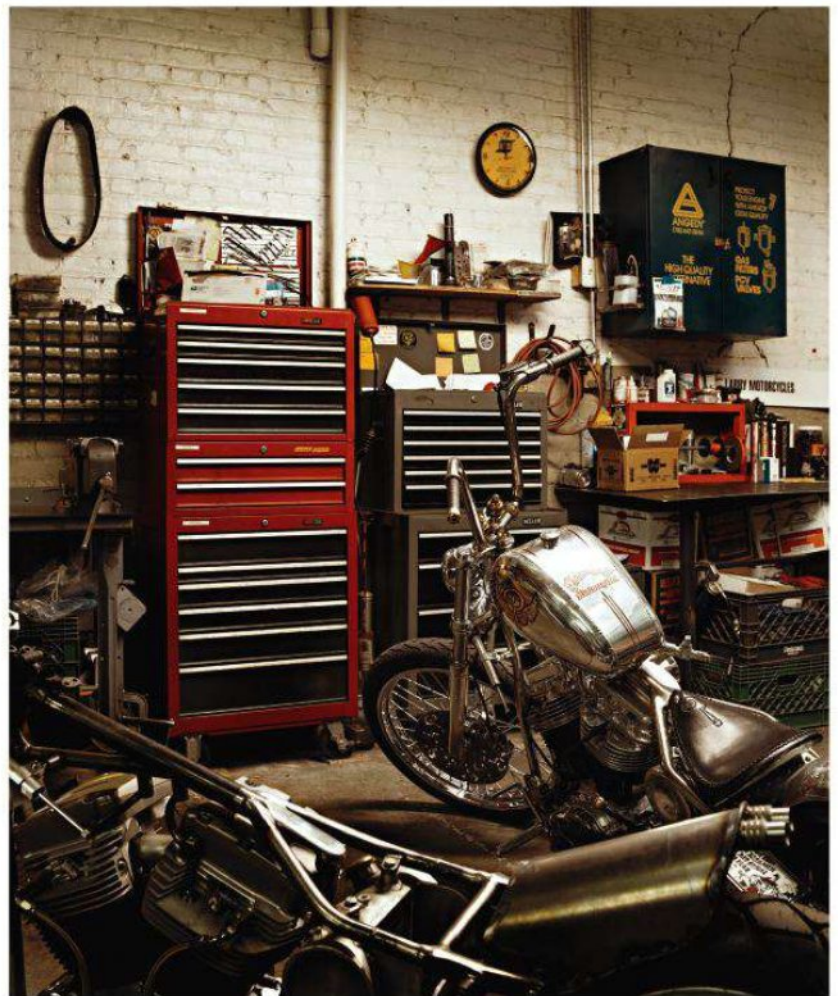
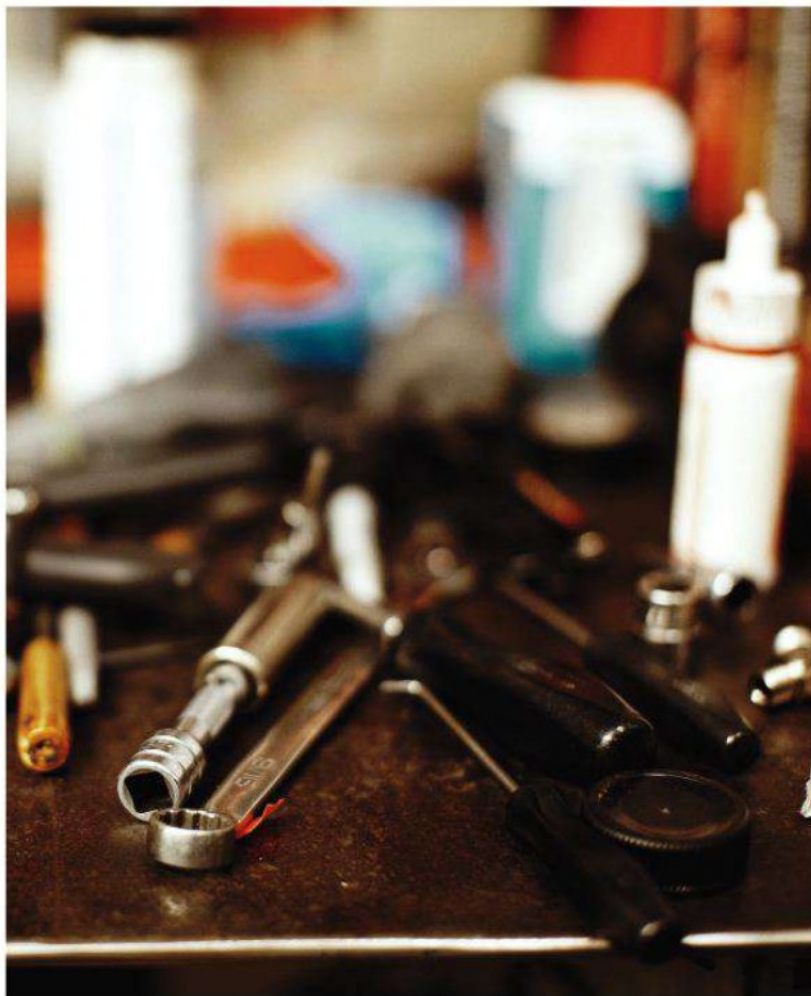
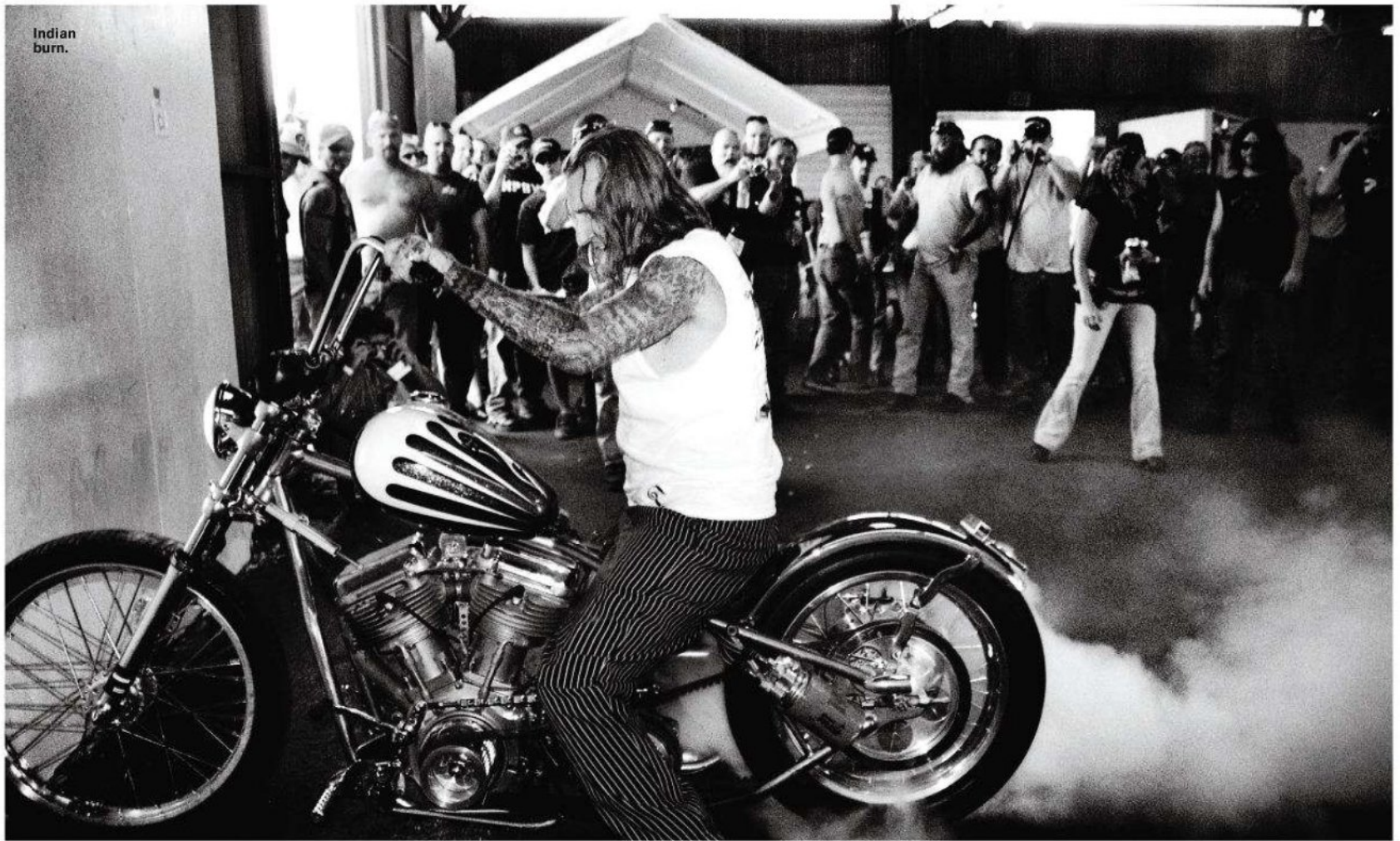
Past a lithograph of a foul-mouthed Mickey Mouse flipping the bird sits current owner and operator Bobby Seeger Jr. Arms covered in weathered tattoos, he sifts through a pile of handwritten letters, some bearing visible traces of the many miles they've traveled to land on his makeshift desk. "I told our Facebook fans to send me self-addressed stamped envelopes and I'd mail them some

stickers," Seeger explains. "Look at the shit I got myself into—some didn't even send envelopes! I'll mail them anyway." Visibly overwhelmed at the endeavor, he still speaks with a smile, honored to keep the name of his former partner and dear friend, Indian Larry, alive.

For anyone even ankle-deep in the motorcycle scene, describing Larry Desmedt's life is almost pointless. You either knew him or knew of him—a polarizing individual to say the least. The man's requiem would play like a sweet song of redemption, a classic tale of turning one's life around that could only be possible in the good ol' U.S. of A. Growing up a kid who lived to tinker with and disassemble everything, Larry met life's demons early on. He was raised in the tranquil riverfront town of Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY, but his rebellious nature quickly got him wrapped up in the wrong crowd of characters. When he was still a teenager, Larry had built a rap sheet that would rival career criminals twice his age. From car chases to truck-jackings to old-fashioned armed robbery, the young man with a budding passion for bike-building ended up a resident of Ossining's Sing Sing Correctional Facility—but not before recovering from a gunshot wound to the head, inflicted after a stickup gone bad. The life of crime clearly wasn't working out, and Larry knew it. Instead of lifting weights or jockeying for yard respect, he kicked back and read book after book, waiting out the clock for another shot at an honest living.







### BACK IN THE SHOP, SEEGER IS QUICK TO WARD OFF DISCUSSION

of Larry's sordid past. When asked exactly what his late friend was into before straightening himself out, his description is simple: "Ah, wild partying—the drinking, the drugs—you know, that sweet New York lifestyle." It's clearly something he'd rather not focus on, nor is the subject of Larry's untimely death. A quick internet search will give you many accounts of the accident that robbed Seeger of his business partner and pal. Site after site describes the tragic scene: a bike rally in Concord, NC, an adoring crowd gathered to watch Indian Larry stand upright in the saddle (a stunt for which he was renowned), a bike that wobbled under deceleration, and a converted soul floating skyward way too soon.

Again, Seeger's account is much less glamorous. "My wife, myself and a little team of guys were there with Larry all the time," he says with trepidation. "One day Larry blacks out—he's dehydrated—he falls off his motorcycle and passes away. So in the end, we're kind of unsure what to do, but we end up still building motorcycles, the ultimate goal to push his name the best we can ... without whoring it out."

Even the untrained eye would be able to see that this is an intent Seeger is adamant about maintaining. Frankly, where he stands doesn't look like someplace a televised, award-winning bike fabricator would have headquartered his operation. But simple functionality was the cornerstone of Indian Larry's build mentality. One thing should be clarified: Larry was not Native American. The ponytailed, heavily tattooed master machinist earned his nickname from becoming *the* guy in New York City to service (or artfully deconstruct) your Indian brand motorcycle—and utilizing his services meant subscribing to a minimalist approach to bike science. In Larry's eyes, most factory motorcycles sported a lot of parts that shouldn't be there; fenders and chain-guards were creature comforts, effectively tacked on for sissies who didn't truly want to experience the raw connection a biker can have with the open road. In his tinkering, anything deemed unnecessary or detrimental to a motorcycle's performance was quickly scrapped. When it came time for his own ground-up builds, it meant such elements didn't even find their way onto the frame. In fact, you'd be hard-pressed to spot so much as a gauge on most Indian Larry originals, because in his words, "By the time your oil pressure is gone, you're wiped anyway."

Those same unadorned standards live on through the bikes and the building today. However, that does not mean, by any stretch of the imagination, that the projects here are simple. Spartan in their specs and features, the flourish of Indian Larry motorcycles is in their craftsmanship and the distinctiveness of their construction. Seeger points to the last bike Larry helped build, in the corner of the room: the "Chain of Mystery." Eye-catching from a distance, it's not until you're right upon the chopper that you truly appreciate what's going on in its bone structure. From rear wheel to front fork, the bike's entire skeleton is composed of chain ("Right from the hardware store," Seeger says), where each link has been uniquely fused and shaped into the form of a bike.

Comparing it to the twisting spiral frame of the bike next to it (another Indian Larry trademark), you'll begin to understand how complex the idea of simplicity is for the bikes and the shop itself. "We've had certain offers for stuff here we've turned down," states Seeger. "You can see the way our setup is, we just make good with it every day. We're trying to grow up a little bit, but we got a small, good team of guys and we stay true to the roots of what was going on when Larry was alive."

### TO REALLY UNDERSTAND SEEGER'S DEDICATION IS TO KNOW THE

random, somewhat haphazard history of his friendship with Larry. You might think a bond this strong was entrenched in childhood friendship, or more apropos, a biker club. For Seeger, the explanation is much simpler. "I knew him from the early '90s. Well, I knew of him," he admits. "I was working for the beautiful city of New York, in the tunnels. The first time I actually met him, I was in this girl Andrea's tattoo shop. She owned East Side Ink [near] 2nd Street and Avenue A. That was somewhere around '93. I was getting my legs tattooed. I want to say he had just gotten his throat done, or maybe just before that." The neck ink that Seeger refers to was perhaps Larry's most

famous piece, a four-line lettering that read "In God We Trust—Vengeance is Mine Sayeth the Lord—No Fear." The middle two lines were written in reverse, so their owner could read them in the mirror, at home, or on the road. "Anyway, after that I seen him outside a Sheer Terror show going into Coney Island High; from then on it was just meeting up in the street, hanging out, and having coffee," remarks Seeger. "The funny thing was, we hardly ever talked about bikes. It was always just other shit."


After a few years as friends with Seeger and wife Elisa, Larry began to see promise in the couple as business partners. Recognizing the potential of his own character and name in the budding world of reality TV, he approached the two with the idea of some simple branding and merchandising. "What do you want out of this?" Seeger asked. "You want to see your name in lights?" As a blithe gesture of their dedication, he and his wife had a custom-crafted "Indian Larry" neon sign made for their friend. "Right now it's hanging in Billy's Antiques on Houston and Bowery, just because he's a good friend of Larry's. It's not for sale, but I have to get it out of there," he remarks. "If you know Billy, he'll sell ice in the winter." Needless to say, the joke of a gesture went over well, and the rest was history.

Now, with his small, efficient staff, Seeger and team spend every working minute trying to preserve the values of their fallen comrade. "Everybody here does their own little part," he remarks. "Dave here does the motor builds, while Matt is on the machining. Alex, overall, can do a bit of everything—he's our little gem. Eddie does a lot of fabricating. Then there's Dr. Ralph. He's an actual foot surgeon in the city that comes here on his days off to machine parts. This kid Sebastian, if he's not polishing, he's cleaning. Everybody does a little something and it all works."

"It all works" is just a bit of an understatement. The end results are perhaps the purest examples of "Made in the USA" machinery one can buy. On a typical Indian Larry motorcycle, only two elements are completed outside this Brooklyn block: paint and leather. Customer builds, like the Shamrocked softail awaiting delivery to Shane McMahon of WWE fame, are sent to Robert Pradke's Custom Auto Design in Connecticut. "Then we got this guy way the fuck out on Long Island named Christian, who owns a place called Zion Leather," says Seeger. "He does all our seats, tool bags, and stuff like that. Guy's got himself a little hut with his motorcycle in the living room, and he knocks all sorts of shit out for us." Completely wrenched and fitted, there's little on a finished chopper that wasn't made—not just assembled—in the States. "That whole 'Made in the USA' thing, that sells, especially overseas," remarks the proud owner. "But a lot of dudes don't know they're buying stuff that was pretty much only put together over here. Look at the parts next time. Not with us. Larry was about fast, clean, simple, and American. And that's what we deliver." With more than 40 percent of the business coming from overseas, Seeger realizes it's an important detail for his continued success—success that has come from private collectors and celebrities, neither of which seem to really faze him. "Yeah, if you Googled us, I guess you'd see that Brad Pitt owns a few of our bikes. He'll stop by and check things out while we build."

That's maybe the best indication of the vibe that resonates between these walls and with the staff of Indian Larry Motorcycles. Their name is known worldwide; the dude who wifed-up Angelina Jolie stops by now and then. On the far wall hang pictures of Larry riding with Harrison Ford, amazing photographs that Seeger doesn't even point out. He'd rather talk about their eighth annual block party that's still months away, in September. These guys don't care about being famous. They're just out to build motorcycles that keep a little piece of their beloved partner here on earth.

When pressed for one last story of his pal, Seeger again reverts to the simpler moments. "I don't know ... I got a million pictures of crazy shit we encountered on the road; girls pulling out their titties and Larry signing them. But with him, we always had the most fun with the simple stuff. You know, riding back from shows, stopping for Wendy's every time we filled up the tanks. Not your typical biker shit. Larry was just a regular dude." Regular dudes are what Seeger and his team are as well; they just happen to construct phenomenal motorcycles, known the world over—all in a building you'd probably never even notice. ■

A bright yellow background filled with numerous small, scattered red dots of varying sizes, creating a starry or confetti-like effect.

# TEAM CHRISTINA

MEET CHRISTINA PERRI, THE FIRST LEGITIMATE  
BREAKOUT SINGER-SONGWRITER WHO GREW UP READING  
THE *TWILIGHT* BOOKS. YES, REALLY.

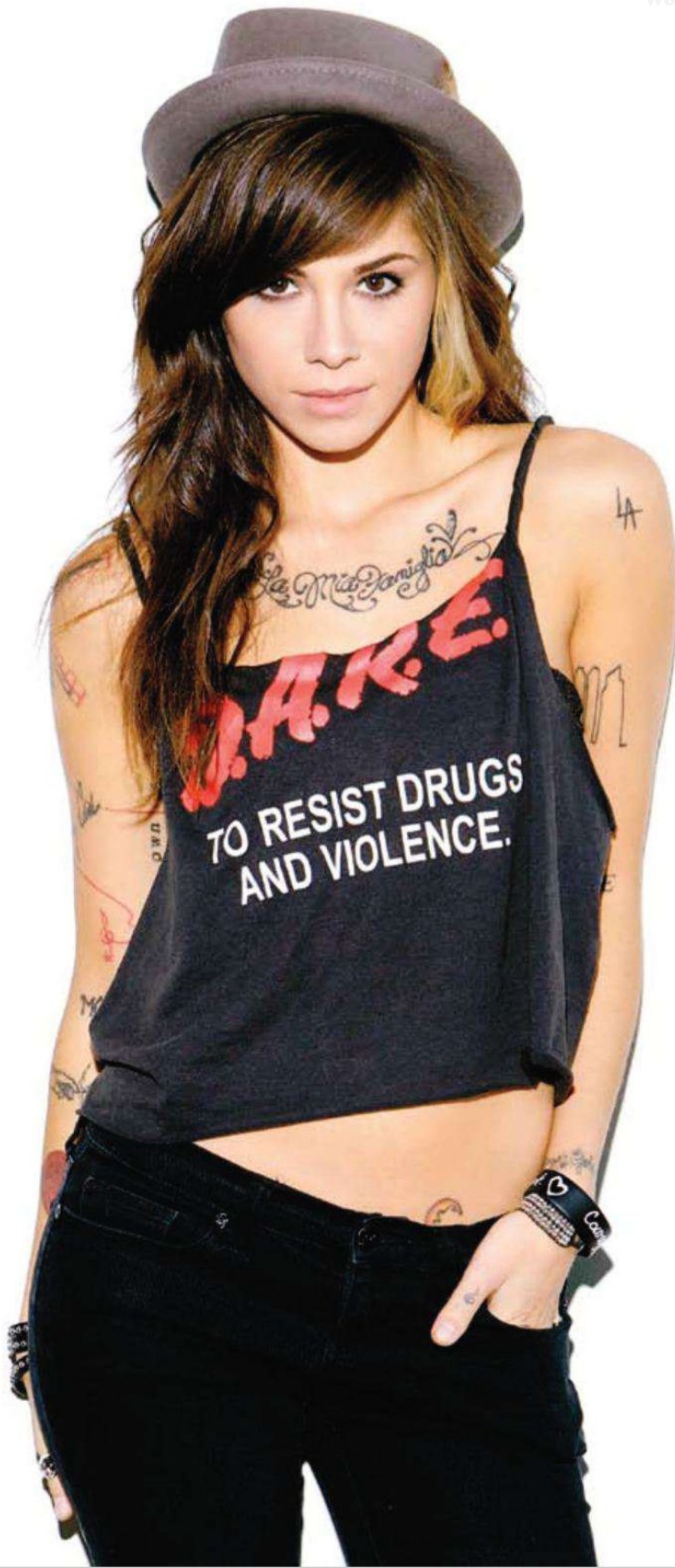
BY ROCKY RAKOVIC PHOTOS BY HARPER SMITH





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BLOOD METER RUN  
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MUSCULAR DYS-TROPHY

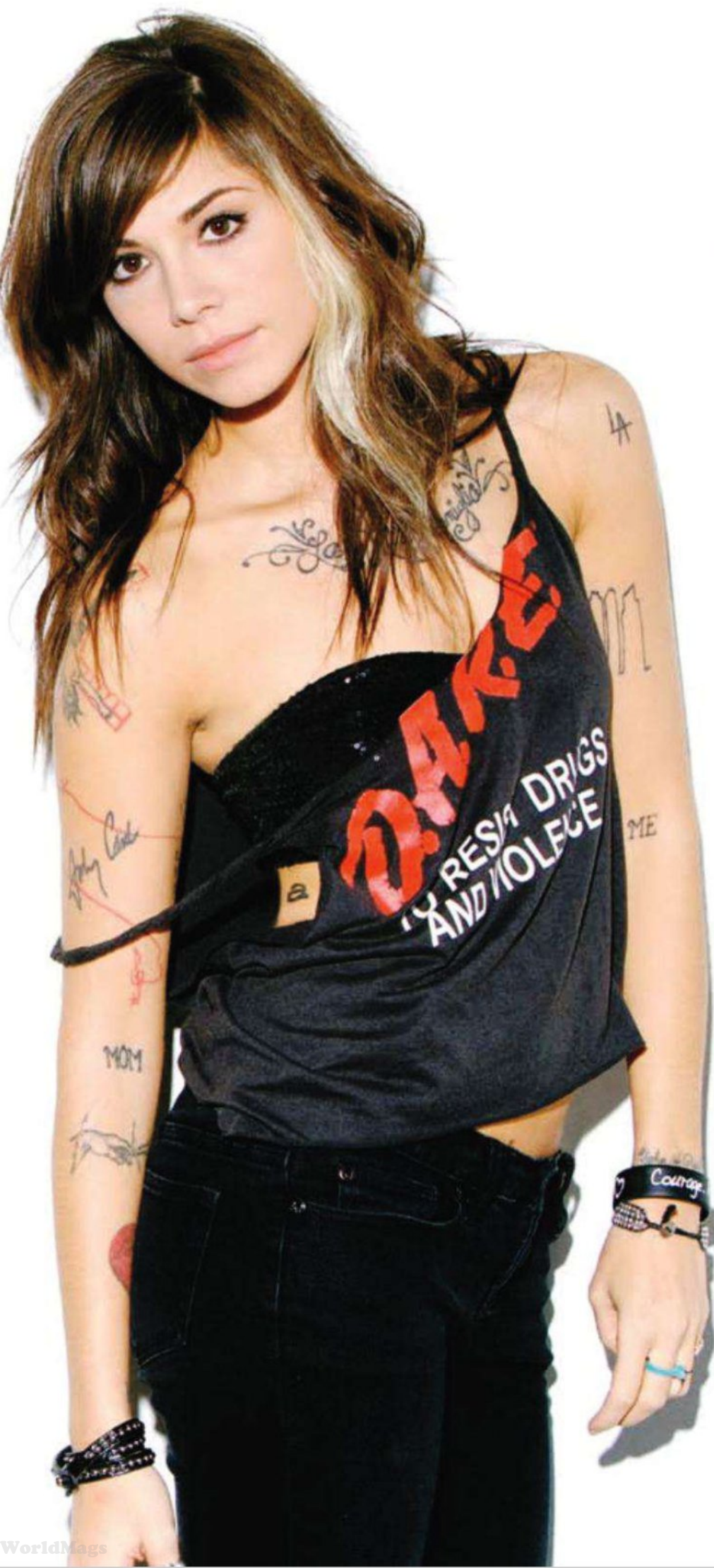


W

e are at odds with pop culture. Maybe there is something in the tattoo ink permeating our blood that makes us skeptical, but it seems clear to us that

most summer blockbusters, *Billboard* artists, and mall fashion are created to appeal to the simple-minded masses. In our search for art we tend to reject the mainstream on principle. So when we first heard of Christina Perri, who got her big break by having her ballad "Jar of Hearts" played on *So You Think You Can Dance*, it was easy to dismiss her as just another Jewel. Then we took the time to take a second look at Perri, her tattoos, and even those *Twilight* books she's always talking about. The tween literature offers some compelling words that have been turned into tattoos by many: "If I could dream at all, it would be about you." "Time passes. ... Even when each tick of the second hand aches like the pulse of blood behind a bruise." "And so the lion fell in love with the lamb. What a stupid lamb. What a sick, masochistic lion." Turns out *Twilight* author Stephenie Meyer exceeds expectations—just as Perri's "Jar of Hearts" lyrics do: "And who do you think you are?/Runnin' 'round leaving scars/Collecting your jar of hearts/And tearing love apart/You're gonna catch a cold/From the ice inside your soul."

So Meyer isn't Billy Shakespeare, and Perri isn't



yet John Lennon. But the Beatles did start out as a boy band of sorts—one that Perri grew up listening to. Others in her musical education, like James Taylor and “phases” of Lil’ Kim and Guns N’ Roses, are eclipsed by her all-time favorite, crooner Dean Martin. And based on her pipes and the chops she has to stand and deliver the message of a heart-wrenching song without the help of modern effects, Perri seems to have a little Dino in her. Maybe it’s her Italian blood, which she honors with a chest tattoo that reads “Mia Famiglia.”

“[For the most part] my family was opposed to my tattoos when I got them from ages 15 to 23,” recounts 24-year-old Perri. “But now that I’m doing well they tell me that they are cute.” She’s recently been getting her work done by Taka Tamada at Body Electric Tattoo in Los Angeles, but 28 of her 35 tattoos were inked by Reverend Mike in her native state of Pennsylvania. Her break-in song was also conceived at home while she was dealing with a divorce. “I was in a pretty dark, scary place where you are in between lives,” she says. “I was home in Philly for Christmas 2009. I didn’t think I’d go back to L.A. I didn’t have a job, I didn’t have a dude. And my first big, epic relationship from years ago called looking for me. For the first time, I didn’t give in. And then I wrote [‘Jar of Hearts’].”

Not long after came *So You Think You Can Dance*, and publicity from the internet and performances on shows like *The Tonight Show With Jay Leno* and *Conan*. “Without YouTube I wouldn’t have launched as big and as fast as I had,” Perri says. “If I won an award, I’d have to thank YouTube and Twitter ... I really wish I knew what Eddie Vedder did all day long.”

In her first bid toward someday giving that acceptance speech, she released the EP *The Ocean Way Sessions* and is following it up with a full-length album and a tour that includes performances of “Jar of Hearts” and “My Eyes.” Of the latter Perri says, “That’s a song about [*Twilight*’s vampire protagonist] Edward Cullen. When I was going through the divorce I used the fantasy land as an escape.”

She’s also immortalized *Twilight* with another type of verse, a tattoo featuring the script from the book’s cover and the word “Cry.” It’s an understatement to say she’s excited for the final *Twilight* movie to hit multiplexes in the fall. “I’ll be waiting on line!” she says sincerely. A sweet sentiment, but by then we trust she’ll be big enough to get tickets without having to queue up. 📺

Opposite: H&M shorts; American Apparel socks; vintage T-shirt and bandeau. Previous page: Levi’s jeans; vintage D.A.R.E. shirt, bandeau, and hat. Page 57: H&M shorts; American Apparel socks; vintage T-shirt and sunglasses.

**Stylist:** Melissa Orndorff  
**Hair and makeup:** Tyler Colton  
 at celestineagency.com









# PAUL RODRIGUEZ JR.

When they signed his birth certificate he became a household name—then he made it legendary on the streets.

BY ROCKY RAKOVIC PHOTOS BY CHRISTOPHER BEYER

There is a “Paul Rodriguez” Venn diagram. One circle represents people ages 44 to 104 who hear the name Paul Rodriguez and think of the actor and stand-up comedian; the other represents those under 31 who hear the same name and identify it with the three-time X Games golden boy in street skating. Those 32–43 are in the middle; they know both the funnyman and his son, Paul Rodriguez Jr., the skater. Junior is a prolific pro skateboarder with many credits, but none more impressive than his name being the fifth ever to be on a pair of Nikes. That and his father’s prideful bon mot: “My son’s giving me competition. He’s the bomb. He’s good-looking, talented, and doesn’t ask me for money.” We caught up with younger Paul Rodriguez as he skates out of his father’s shadow and makes a name for himself as his nickname in the skating world: P-Rod.

#### **INKED: So where did P-Rod come from?**

**PAUL RODRIGUEZ JR.:** As embarrassing as it is, I gave it to myself. I had a friend named Spanky and a couple of other friends in the skate industry, and I always wanted a nickname so I took it upon myself. Believe it or not, I didn’t even know who A-Rod was when I came up with it. I was watching MTV and they were calling Jennifer Lopez “J.Lo.” Then I wondered how my name would work like that and I thought that “P-Rod” sounded funny. A little bit later I went on tour in Canada with City Stars and when I got there I was like, “Sup guys? P-Rod’s here!” And they were laughing and asking me what that is all about and I answered, “I’m P-Rod.”

At first it was just a couple of guys who would call me that, and then one time I was doing a signing at a store and a kid came up to me and said, “Oh, it’s P-Rod!” That’s when I noticed it was more a known thing.

**Speaking of names, you aren’t really a Junior, right?** Yeah, my dad got to be a name with Paul

Rodriguez, even though my grandfather was Senior. And it just got so complicated that calling me Junior was just easier.

#### **What was it like growing up Paul Rodriguez Jr.?**

For me it was normal because I had nothing else to reference off of. My dad was on the road all the time so I only saw him once a month. When he came home we would go golfing or to Disneyland, and if he was playing a show somewhere close I would go with him once in a while.

#### **Did you learn anything applicable to skating from seeing him perform?**

Either consciously or subconsciously, over the years I have been taking notes on how he is with his fans. I always value fans and people who are into what I am doing. I always make sure to be grateful and be good. Without fans you are nothing.

**Do you feel that you have a good connection with your fans?** Back when I went on my first big

Nike Europe tour in Holland this kid asked me to sign his leg, and the filmer with us showed me the tape later where the kid said, “I’m going to get this tattooed!” And I was like, Wow, that’s crazy. Then he sent the photo of the tattoo and it was insane. That wasn’t what I got into skateboarding for, but when it happens it feels good.

#### **Did your dad buy you your first skateboard?**

Sort of. I bought my first board with Christmas money that I saved up.

#### **What made you first want to skate?**

In the end of 1996 into '97 I was going to a new junior high and there was a whole crew of guys who would skate before and after school. I was super fascinated by it; I would sit down and watch them but I was a really shy kid—I didn’t talk to anyone—so it took me a while until I met them, but they sparked my inspiration.

#### **So did you start skating to fit in or because you thought it looked fun?**

What drew me toward skating is that I couldn’t figure out how you flipped a board. I was fascinated that someone could jump down stairs flipping their board and grind on a rail or ledge and keep the board stuck to his feet.

#### **When you first started riding did you know it was for you?**

It clicked. I wasn’t doing tricks right off the bat, but just riding, rolling, and doing little things on a board hooked into me so hard that it was all I could think about, all I wanted to do. From there, any spare moment, I was riding my skateboard and trying to figure out how this thing works.

**Where did you get your education?** There



“(My father) observes his surroundings and tries to find out how to make it funny, and when I look at my surroundings I have to come up with creative ideas, like how to grind it.”

were no skate parks near me, so I grew up skating street only. There was a local skate shop right near my house so I would jump a wall and skate over to it. There I would watch skate videos, read all the skate magazines, sit and talk to the older skaters. ... Looking back on it I was probably bugging the hell out of them with a million questions. But they didn't seem to care, and they didn't care if you would skate out in front of the store in the parking lot. Nowadays you can't do that, with lawsuits and all.

**And skateboarding is a crime.** I have heard that.

**What do your parents think of skating?** My mom was always supportive and my dad now loves it. I don't know if he was ever unsupportive but he, not knowing anything about skating, didn't think anything could come of it. He'd say things like, "I'm sure it sounds fun to you, but you should think of something you could really do for a living. How are you going to support a family like that?" My rebuttal was always, "You are straight out of Mexico, a son of migrant workers who had to struggle all their life, and how did Grandma and Grandpa take it when you said you were going to become a comedian?" Then he would say, "Son, if you do it you really need to be good. It's a long shot." That is what parents have to say to their kid. Now, being a father, I understand that better.

**And they allowed you to drop out of school to turn pro.** I was 15 when I officially dropped out. After months and months of begging my mom to give me home-schooling, I finally got sponsored to skate by a small board company, and then she let me do home studies. From there I never really met the criteria as far as school was concerned but I skated my ass off. So I was making progress and getting better sponsors, a little here and a little there. By the time I turned 17 I was doing fine financially for a kid, and I turned pro later on that year.

**Pretty impressive for a teenager.** My mom always wanted to move out of our area and I always loved it, so she moved to another place and I stayed in the house. Technically I was living on my own, and she was cool because I was able to help her with rent for the place that she moved to. And everything fortunately worked out from there.

**How was your first foray into the spotlight at the X Games?** My very first one was '03. I was 18 and it was by invite only, so to me it was just an accomplishment to be there. I liked the course they built so I just had fun skating it in, and I think

that's why I was able to do pretty decent. I wasn't saying to myself, "I better perform, I better do well." I was like, whatever, this is super fun. And I won third place.

**Do you feel like your lackadaisical attitude helps you skate?** I think having a relaxed attitude and not overanalyzing or overstressing anything is helpful in life. Even as I got older and started doing well, and people expected me to do well, I never felt an added pressure to perform.

**And with that you went on to win gold three times since in the X Games.** Yep, I was in the same mental state, except when I won I was like, "Holy shit, this is crazy."

**How did you react when the major endorsement deals like Mountain Dew and Nike—who had never endorsed skaters before—started knocking on your front door?** I felt phenomenal. I always dreamed big. When I did something I always dreamed that I was going to be the best one day. When I was young and doing karate I would say that I'm going to be Bruce Lee; when I played guitar, I said to myself, Okay, I'm going to be Jimi Hendrix. It was the same thing with skateboarding. I wanted to be Eric Koston, Chad Muska, or Andrew Reynolds. And that was my mind-set. So for Nike to be knocking on my door, that was bigger than anything I could have dreamed. Because at that point, I was just hoping to get a few skate company sponsorship and getting my name on a board, and that would have been conquering the world. So when Nike called I asked, "Are you guys serious? You know I just skate, right?" They flew me up to the Portland Nike campus, took me on a tour, and I just asked them, "Where do I sign?"

**Did you help develop the Nike SB [skateboarding] brand?** I have had more and more involvement as the years go on. When we first started I just told them what I wanted in a skate shoe: I wanted support and cushioning in the heels but I didn't want it too thick; I wanted a good, nice suede on my shoes, because that was the material I was feeling and I wanted a cool profile. They came up with a few drawings and after I selected the one that I was loving, they made a sample of it. I skated in it, and that was all she wrote.

**Target recently tapped you as well.** They came to me a little over a year ago, expressing some interest in my skateboarding. I've been shopping at Target for forever so I thought, That is not a bad spon-

sor to have. It's a one-stop shop where you can get everything. They have been really cool, and they are rebuilding my personal skate park from scratch, so I am blessed to have a sponsor like that.

**Another high compliment was being in a few of the Tony Hawk video games.** That was awesome. I was so psyched; it was a milestone. Also, I think that is when my father finally got it that I could make a life skating.

**Do you see any parallels between your line of work and your father's?** There are a lot of similarities between our lifestyles. One is that we both do improv. He observes his surroundings and tries to find out how to make it funny, and when I look at my surroundings I have to come up with creative ideas, like how to grind it.

**How did you decide on your tattoos?** The one on my right forearm is Jesus. I was 18 when I got hit by the bug and I knew that if I got something I wouldn't want to think that it would be stupid in five years. I 100 percent believe in Jesus Christ, I 100 percent believe in the higher power. I'm no preacher, no angel—but I 100 percent believe the truth. A friend of mine who owned a skate shop hooked me up with this gangster thug dude named Trippy who did it. I went in there knowing that I wanted a picture of Jesus and he drew me out a couple of options. I picked out the one I wanted, and that was that.

**And on your triceps?** That Day of the Dead skull was the first skateboard graphic that Plan B skateboards put on my deck. The whole idea behind the Day of the Dead skull was that it touches on my Mexican roots and my roots in skateboarding.

**Do you have plans for more?** Yes, but I just don't know exactly what. Since I have a daughter I might get a portrait of her, or her name. But I haven't pulled the trigger on it. So I'm rolling it around in my mind. Anyone who knows me knows that I am not super spontaneous. I'll pine over something for a while before I decide to do it. That's just the way I am.

**Do you have the same mentality when you skate?** I am a scaredy-cat. I won't try something until I am positive I can do it—I am terrified of killing myself. I think of a trick for a couple of years before I mess with it. I am not the guy you just take to a big handrail and I just jump down it. I'll roll up a half-hour before and debate on it. I might know I can do it, but I'm a cautious kid. Fortunately I haven't broken a single bone while skating. Yet. ■



On Scott: vintage jacket, ksubi shirt, levi's and vintage boots.  
Motorcycles, from the foreground: Harley-Davidson XL  
1200, Harley-Davidson Sportster, Birmingham Small Arms  
Company, Harley-Davidson Softail, Victory 8-Ball.

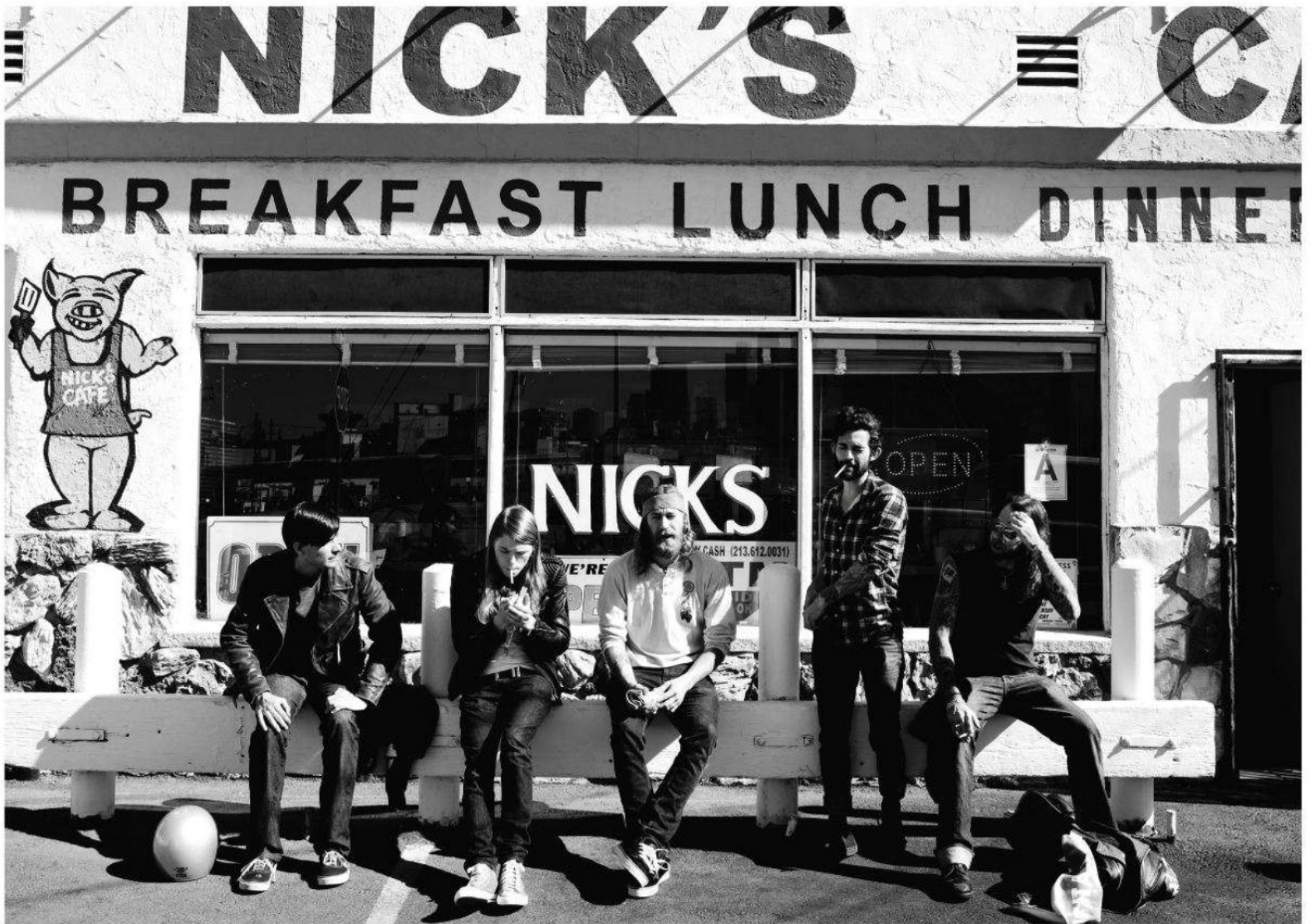


# RIDERS ON THE STORM

HIGHWAY MEN DON'T  
WEAR STREET CLOTHES.

PHOTOS BY MAGDALENA WOSINSKA  
STYLED BY DJUNA BEL





From left: Bell helmet. Levi's jeans; American Apparel shirt; vintage jacket; Vans shoes. American Apparel T-shirt; vintage jacket and belt; Levi's jeans; Converse shoes. Altamont jeans; model's own shirt; Fallen shoes. Levi's jeans; Fremont shirt; Converse shoes. Levi's jeans; vintage leather jacket, boots, and tank top. Opposite: Levi's jeans; Fremont shirt; Converse shoes. Vintage tank top.







Above, from left: Levi's jeans; American Apparel hoodie; False Idols shirt; vintage denim vest; Converse shoes. Altamont jeans; model's own baseball shirt; Fallen sneakers. Levi's vintage black denim jacket and jeans; G-Star light denim jacket; Alternative Apparel shirt. Schott leather jacket; vintage shirt; MNRKY T-shirt; Levi's pants. Levi's jeans; Ksubi shirt; vintage military jacket; Vans sneakers. Bell helmets (worn by all riders throughout). Motorcycles: middle, Honda Phantom; right, Triumph Bonneville SE. Opposite: Altamont jeans; Fallen shoes; model's own shirt.







Opposite, from left: Levi's jeans; vintage belt; Converse shoes. Levi's jeans; vintage tank top; Converse shoes. This page: Levi's jeans; vintage T-shirt; Converse shoes; Bell helmet.



This page, from left: Altima jacket and jeans; vintage Pabst T-shirt. Levi's jeans and vintage jacket; Fremont shirt. Levi's jeans; vintage shirt. Levi's jacket and shirt; Converse shoes. Levi's jeans and shirt. Opposite: From left: Cheap Monday shirt; American Apparel T-shirt; vintage belt; Levi's pants. Altamont jeans; vintage Pabst T-shirt.

**Hair and grooming:** Jay Diola  
**Models:** Brian, Eddie, Thom, Matt, Trent, Scott  
**Styling assistant:** Annie Castaldi







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# INKED SCENE

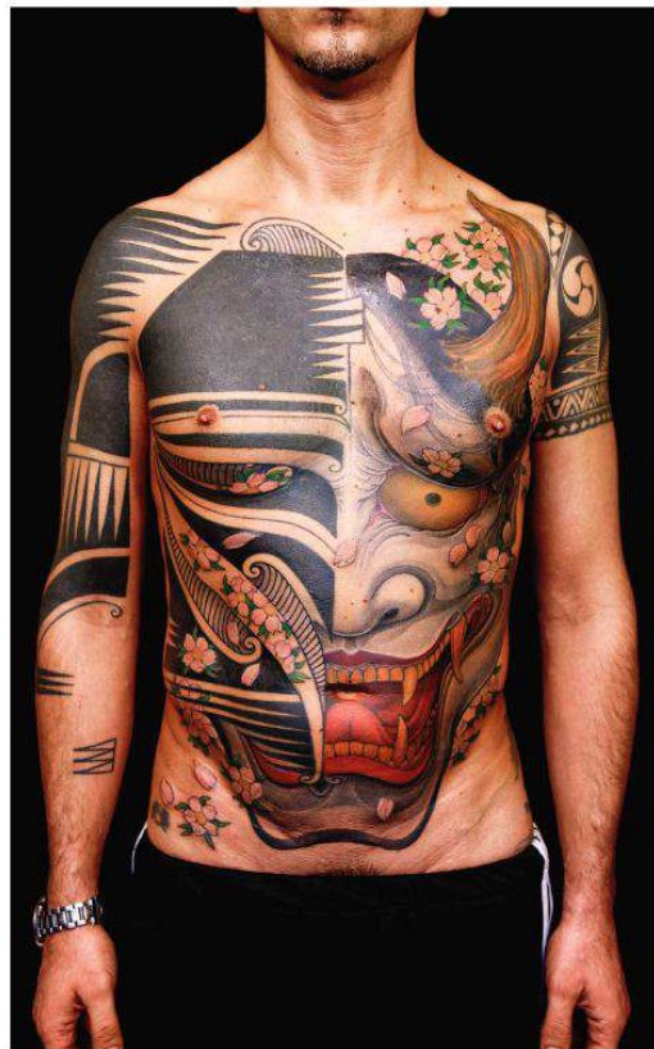
ICON. ARTIST PROFILE. SHOP TALK.

"We are not businessmen, and this isn't about a salary. When you pick up that needle, you have to do your best because it's on someone else. I feel like maybe we need to go back to the days before business was king." *-Shige*

PHOTO BY JONATHAN SPRAGUE



## inked scene | ICON



## SHIGE

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BY TAKAHIRO "HORITAKA" KITAMURA  
PHOTOS BY TAKI

Few tattooers have built a name like Shige of Yokohama. With countless magazine articles, a room full of first-place trophies from conventions worldwide, a book, museum appearances, and, most importantly, throngs of ecstatic clients, Shige is definitely a success. His work, a sublime new take on traditional Japanese tattooing, has taken the world by storm. As with all success stories, it did not come easy. Shigenori "Shige" Iwasaki, along with the support of his wife and soul mate, Chisato, has worked night and day perfecting his craft. What follows is a candid conversation we had about tattoos, art, and how Shige sees himself.

**SHIGE:** You know, before we get started, I don't want this to be a normal interview. I have a book out and I've done enough interviews—people know my basic history. I don't want this to be a list of places I've worked or artists that influenced me.

**INKED:** Right. Well then, let's talk about your opinions. For example, how do you feel about tattooing in this day and age?

**SHIGE:** I think this is a very strange time in tattooing. With the explosion in popularity and acceptance, much has changed. Some things have changed for the better—and, of course, some things for the worse. As I see all of this, one thing that bothers me is that I don't want tattooers to lose pride in their work, especially with traditional Japanese

work. I feel that the reason that Japanese tattooing survived and flourished is because there was a measure of pride, even—and maybe especially—because it was forced underground. Japanese tattooing does not need any newcomers who don't take pride in this. I don't want to grandstand, nor do I think that I can dictate what tattooing is; I just want people to take pride in what they do.

**Can you expand on that?** While I believe that *irezumi* is art, I'm not out there proclaiming that. [Editor's note: *Irezumi* is a Japanese word for tattooing that was originally used to describe markings administered on prisoners by the authorities. The word was shunned by tattoo artists who didn't want any association with the barbaric practice



**“I DO LIKE THAT TATTOO ART CAN BE AND IS BEING SEEN AS FINE ART. BUT THEY ARE NOT THE SAME, NOR DO THEY NEED TO BE. WITH ARTISTS, THEY ARE THE STARS. TATTOOERS SHOULD NOT BE STARS; THEY SHOULD JUST BE ORDINARY PEOPLE.”**



of forced tattooing. However, in this day and age, *irezumi* has lost that stigma and is used to describe traditional Japanese tattooing.] I think that pride and craftsmanship are more important. That is much more important than fancy drawings. When I say pride, I don't mean pride as in fame or anything like that. I just mean that this work affects people and their lives, so it must be taken seriously. There are many professions that require this sort of pride, like a teacher or a doctor—it's not about money. I would love to see more young tattooers with this attitude. This may sound like I am preaching, and I don't mean to, but maybe someone needs to say it.

**We think that there are a lot of people who feel the same way—that tattooers have a responsibility to their clients and to the profession.** I'm not saying everything needs to be epic, large, or planned, or anything like that. I am not trying to say that one type of work is better than another. I believe tattooing can have many forms, like I have commemorative tattoos and fun tattoos. But I don't like tattoos that cheapen tattooing. It takes all kinds, from the smallest one-point tattoo. If you put your heart into it, it can become a valued and treasured thing to the wearer. You have to take

the pride. Tattooing is art but it is not just art. It is more sacred than that.

**It's funny because some artists may not like that. I think there are lots of tattooers who want tattooing to be art. And there are artists who wouldn't want to think tattooing is more sacred than art.** Well, I don't want that to be misunderstood. I'm not saying tattooing is better or worse than fine art. I think tattooing and art are different worlds. There is a similarity in that a true artist and a true tattoo artist give of themselves to what they do. I do paint, but I think I will be a tattooer till death. I draw and paint, but it's for tattooing. It expands my tattoo world. And my clients can understand it very easily. My clients can appreciate my paintings.

**That makes sense—not everything should be tattooed.** Yes. And like I said before, about responsibility: If you don't like your painting, you don't have to look at it. But with our work, it is on the client. When you pick up that needle, you have to do your best because it's on someone else. We are not businessmen, and this isn't about a salary. I don't think it's just the tattoo world that has problems like this. Like schoolteachers, in the past, that was a very proud

profession. Everything now is like, “Well, it's okay.” The quality standard has changed. There are a lot of problems with that; teachers are not paid enough, and parents and teachers don't discipline the children enough. Teaching was a sacred job, now it is like business. And I'm not saying it's the teacher's fault—the system has changed. If the teacher strays from the curriculum of the standard government defined protocol, he or she will be fired.

**That's very interesting.** I think it's a valid comparison since both of our professions ultimately should be about helping and providing for the well-being of others. Life goes in cycles. The last 10 years have seen amazing work, and tattooing has changed immensely. People like Filip Leu, Guy Aitchison, Paul Booth, the Tattoo the Earth generation—they wanted to create amazing, high-quality work. However, in the last 10 years, I feel like business has overcome the tattoo world. It got really big, it expanded, and I feel like maybe we need to go back to the days before business was king. I'm not telling people to do this; I am saying this is what I strive to do. At the end of the day, you can only control what you do yourself. But I think it is important that you care about the larger community around you, and

## inked scene | ICON



you must know that you are well-known and people will at least hear what you have to say.

**Tell us more about your philosophy.** I guess what makes it different for me is that I don't necessarily think of tattooing as art. As a Japanese [artist], I am doing a different kind of work. With my personal history, a lot of foreign work came into Japan and I was influenced by it. I saw a lot of the world and it made me see Japanese tattooing differently. Looking in from the outside I learned much about Japan and I have changed my focus accordingly. If you study history, things change with cultural influences. This happens everywhere all the time. I learned much from Leu and many others; I've had lots of outside influences and this has been positive.

**Is that a personal note to Leu?** Well, 90 percent of my body was tattooed by Filip. People with tattoos would understand how I feel. Obviously Filip was a huge influence and I would not be doing what I do without him. However, it's not just him. He didn't invent the tattoo machine, for example. Let's say Sailor Jerry or Ed Hardy—maybe I wouldn't be here without them and what they gave us all. What if there was no Paul Rogers? There are many people who have come before us that have made tattooing what it is. That is what allows me to do what I do. And of course, I am grateful to traditional Japanese tattoo culture. We need all of it. I feel grateful to be part of such a rich cultural history and maybe that's part of why I feel it needs to be protected.

**Your humbleness aside, many people would consider you to be a very influential tattooer of our generation.** I get asked a lot about how I



feel about my influence in the tattooing world, but I don't know anything about that. I guess it makes me happy since I feel that I get inspiration from others all over the world. Back to the talk about art: I do like that tattoo art can be and is being seen as fine art. But they are not the same, nor do they need to be. With artists, they are the stars. Tattooers should not be stars; they should just be ordinary people. Sure, I want to put food on my table and take care of my family, but my life is about tattooing. I'm just living it out. So I don't want tattooing to be tarnished.

**Funny you say that, you have tons of fans!**

Well, of course I appreciate that people like my work, but I am just an ordinary tattooer. I prefer to align myself with teachers and doctors, not artists. I'm speaking about Japanese traditional tattooers, I commend the tattooers moving toward the fine art world—but for me, it is not what I am about. For example, we went to a temple today, and there were many people who went there to sightsee. But I am there because it is part of my life and my spirituality. There is nothing wrong with people appreciating how a statue or temple looks, but for me, being Japanese, this is part of my culture and practice. And it is important to make these things look aesthetically pleasing, to keep the culture and temples going. But the priority for me is the spirituality.

**You seem extremely grounded. Is this because of your spirituality?**

I think I would be lying if I said I never felt jealous of other tattooers—and now there are many extremely talented individuals. So you should put your energy toward beautifying your work. If you can do that, you appreciate people that are working hard and creating good work.

**Everyone feels envy to some degree—it's only natural.** As I said, with the expansion of tattooing there is good and bad, this is true. But I really don't want to see it go in a bad direction. There is some form of karma—you get what you put in—and I guess one can take satisfaction in that. But our field certainly has a lot of drama and politics. But what I try to always keep in mind is that this is my life and my life is devoted to *irezumi*. I can think this way but it is difficult.

When I feel spiritually weak, I go in front of *Fudo Myoo* [one of the Thirteen Buddhas, a grouping of Japanese Buddhist deities]. I humble myself. I am constantly battling with myself. It is not about other people, it is about myself.

**Your conviction and respect translate when you tattoo.**

There is a saying from the Sengoku era, describing the beauty of flowers. It is a good phrase in Japanese about a hundred flowers: *Hyakka Ryo-ran*. It means one hundred flowers blooming at the same time, all types growing freely. And if people could appreciate the different flowers all at once—different beauty. You could use the flowers as a metaphor for tattoo styles. I like this saying and I want to enjoy other flowers and talents. This motivates me. Up until now, our world was underground—not any more! There are a hundred flowers in bloom, and in this era, there are very different talents being shown. If you see something beautiful it should inspire you to create something even more beautiful.

Talking like this, I'm not really one to say something profound. There are different types of flowers. For example, a peony and a cherry blossom—very different flowers and different kinds of beauty. I want to be able to see these other “flowers” as a positive thing. Different beautiful flowers in the same season. If you use this as a metaphor of life, the flower blooms like a life span. In Buddhism you see gods sitting on lotus leaves. The lotus blooms in still water, muddy water. Humans live in the *ukiyo*, floating world. We bloom and head toward our death. *Irezumi* is only in that window. People have different ways of life—whatever you are doing, we are all flowers and all will grow and die. You only can enjoy tattooing while you are alive. Our job is to help. And I think that our job is to add a little color to people's lives.

The thing with art is that it remains. Things happen after an artist's life, money exchanges hands. I think tattooing is very pure, existing between the client and the tattoo artist. We are all going to eventually die, and it is to be enjoyed while we are alive. More than leaving a name, I want my clients to love their work. An artist often doesn't even know the name of the person who buys their paintings. I am very happy to tattoo people who really love and want my work. I've done a lot of interviews and some of your views change over time, but I really don't want to lose my motivation or lower my standards, ever. I hope I can maintain this. ■

# get all dolled up



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## inked scene | SPOT



Standing, from left: Matty No Times, Daniel Albrigo, Jes Irwin, Annie Lloyd, Mohawk John, Myles Karr, Josh Egnew, Jason June, Bryce Cherry, Alex McWatt. Sitting, from left: Kirsten Birmingham, Tiffany Huán, Tamara Waite-Santibanez.

## THREE KINGS TATTOO

572 Manhattan Ave.  
Brooklyn, NY  
718-349-7755  
threekingstattoo.com

BY LANI BUSS  
PORTRAIT AND INTERIOR PHOTOS  
BY TOM MEDVEDICH

It's not uncommon to find the crew at Three Kings Tattoo pelting each other with BB gun pellets, seeing who can go the longest without shaving, daring office manager Jes Irwin to eat an entire ice cream cake for \$100, or etching each other's skin with the likeness of their piercer, Vito Zerillo, as a garden gnome. The 11-artist team of tattooers likes to goof around like any family would, but the owners of Three Kings pride themselves on providing a fun-loving familial atmosphere that also happens to generate ambitious art on the East Coast.

"All the people we work with inspire me," says Alex McWatt, the shop's co-owner since its inception in 2008. "There are bigger inspirations in tattooing, I'm sure, but I think on a day-to-day basis we actually care about each other, we care about doing better with, and for, each other."

"Most shops would just take somebody that would make them a lot of money," adds co-owner Matty No Times about hiring tattooers. "We're not going to do that. If that's going to throw a wrench in the works, it's not worth it. People's personal happiness on an everyday basis is way more important than how much money we can make."

Within the last year guest artists have been knocking on Three Kings's door, and Mario Desa and Seth Ciferri regularly make the rotation. Tattooers Jason June, Paul Bosch, Daniel Trocchio, Tamara, and Daniel Albrigo have recently joined mainstays Mohawk John, Annie Lloyd and Josh Egnew, beside co-owners McWatt, No Times, and Myles Karr. "We have people coming to us all the time," says McWatt. "But we don't necessarily let anybody come and work here either, because we want to keep it positive." It's that type of attitude and family dynamic that McWatt feels draws tattooers to his shop—so don't expect jaded tattooers with iPod buds in their ears at Three Kings. "Everybody here is hungry to do something new and have something more," says No Times.

That incessant eagerness to grow as an artist is also a great motivating factor when it comes time to tattoo. Three Kings employs a staff whose mission is to excel in the industry, and it shows in the results, says McWatt. "You've got Myles Karr who does tattoos that I don't think anybody else can touch, and Mohawk John does, honestly, probably some of the prettiest pinups I've ever seen,"



he says. "Dan Trocchio is quietly influential in the tattoo industry."

"We have some of the best tattooers in the world," agrees No Times.

McWatt, who went from tagging to tattooing, wasn't initially eager to open up his own shop, but when the opportunity fell into his lap he went for it. The Three Kings model—a second home, not just a tattoo shop—is modeled after his apprenticeship with Elio Espana at Fly Rite. "I was extremely lucky to have the apprenticeship that I had," says McWatt, who has been tattooing since 2000. "If I didn't have a real apprenticeship and work at a

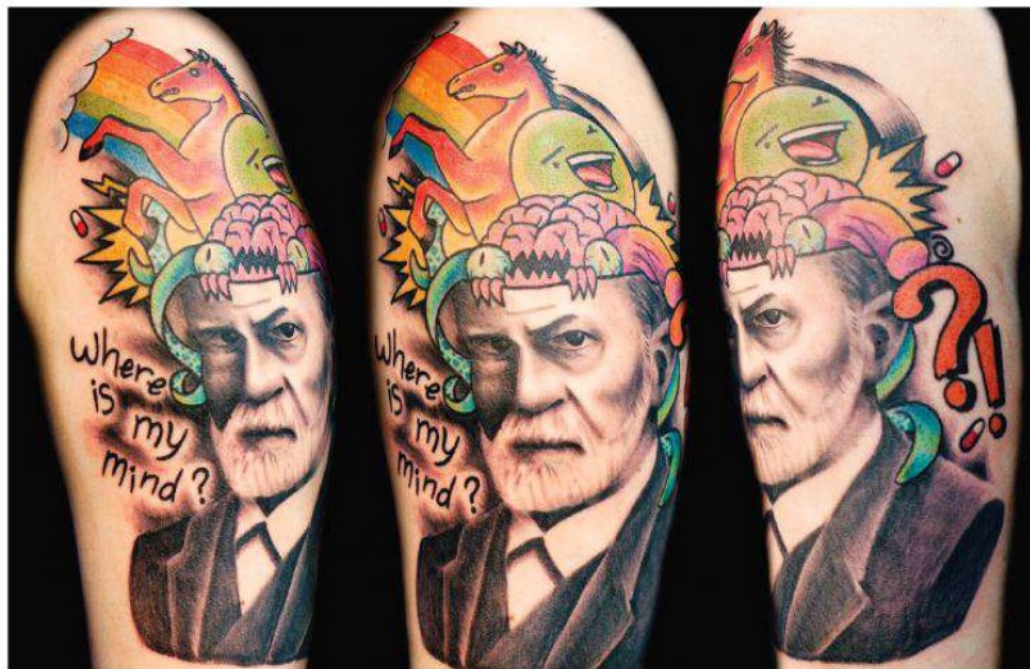
shop like Fly Rite I don't think Three Kings would exist. It influences the look of this place, the feel of this place." His apprenticeship also influenced his way of tattooing. Like Espana, McWatt is adept at all tattoo styles, from traditional Americana to Japanese work. That emphasis on diversity is also what makes Three Kings distinctive, he says. "I don't think there are two people that tattoo the same here," he says. "I really don't think there's too many other shops that can touch on that."

"Everybody has their strong points and they do what they do extremely well," says No Times. "Anybody can sell a car, but very few people can make

that car last 20 to 25 years. I think we offer a product that speaks for itself."

In only three years, Three Kings has truly etched its place in the Greenpoint neighborhood of Brooklyn—and the tattoo industry as a whole—much to the surprise of its owners. "I am psyched to finally be at the point where I'm working next to and meeting all the people I spent the last 10 years thinking were gods," says No Times. "What this shop has become in such a short period of time ... how it has already made it out into the world to other people's ears ... what greater reward is there?" ■

## inked scene | PROFILE



## CAVAN INFANTE

FROM: NO EGRETS TATTOO STUDIO  
VISIT: [MYSAPCE.COM/CAVAN](http://MYSAPCE.COM/CAVAN)

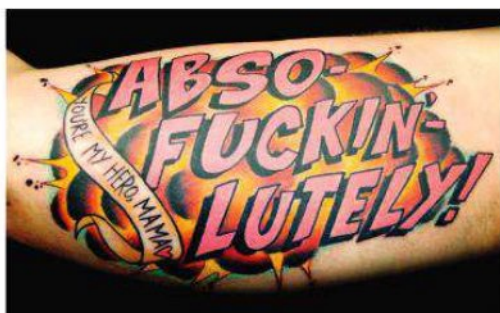
**How would you describe the style of your work?** I used to describe it as comic book influenced, but I've been told it's closer to bathroom stall vandalism. I like that description better. Or Technicolor blasphemous smart-assery.

**What makes your tattoos unique?** They are a combination of pop art, a love affair with typography, a general distaste of most any facet of mainstream culture, Internet-influenced humor, and the strange, wonderful people who are down to get the silly and stupid pieces I draw up.

**What do you find most rewarding about being**

**a tattoo artist?** Having people tell you that you've changed their lives. It's pretty heavy stuff. You get to be pretty nocturnal, draw for dollars, and, oddly, girls think you are cooler for no reason. I assure you, we are not cooler; this assumption is unfounded hearsay.

**What do you see for the future of tattooing?** Subdermal e-paper implants for animated .gif tattoos that also could double as info displays, like to-do lists, weather updates, et cetera. It would be so cyborg. Until that happens, however, it's likely just a bunch of people getting stars and tribal bibles all day, every day. —Christine Davitt





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Model: Veronica Gomez / Photo: Abreum Garcia / GAMAFOTOS.com

## inked scene | SHOP TALK

**NAME:** Kristian Parra

**ASSISTANT MANAGER:** Starlight Tattoo,  
Las Vegas

**Our shop has a wall** dedicated to the famous faces that have stopped by. It's mostly Mario Barth's clients like Sylvester Stallone, Pamela Anderson, Tommy Lee. There's also a German pimp, who is famous back home, I guess. He filmed part of his show at the shop, and they made me tell him he looked like Rod Stewart ... luckily, he really did.

**The shop is inside** the Mandalay Bay Casino, so we get all types. Recently, one of our piercers was doing a piercing in the private room and the woman getting pierced decided to dance around the shop naked. Did I mention the shop's walls are all glass windows?

**I've never tattooed anyone**, but trust me: One of these days, I'll get my boyfriend drunk enough for him to let me!



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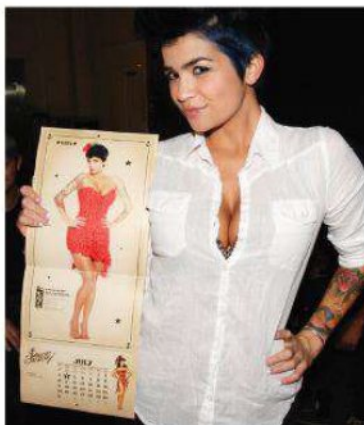
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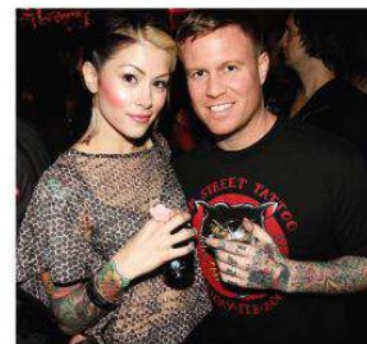
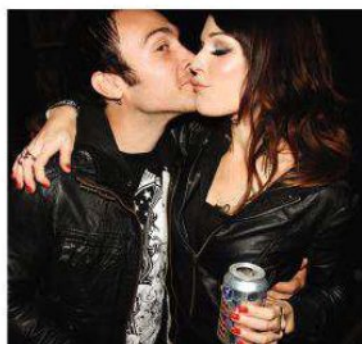
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ARTWORK BY: CARLOS TORRES

# inked scene | EVENTS



**SAILOR JERRY X INKED L.A. PINUP PARTY**  
 For the left coast Sailor Jerry and INKED Pinup Calendar launch, we took over Mr. T's Bowl in Highland Park, invited The Bronx, Film School, and friends to throw down some sweet Sailor Jerry. To our surprise we also spotted some beautiful tattooed girls who made us wish there were more months in a year. Keep a look out for a fine 2012. For more photos go to [inkedmag.com](http://inkedmag.com).





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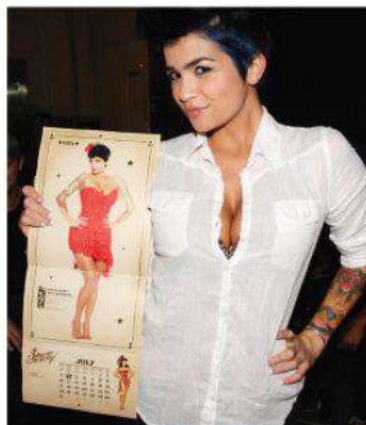
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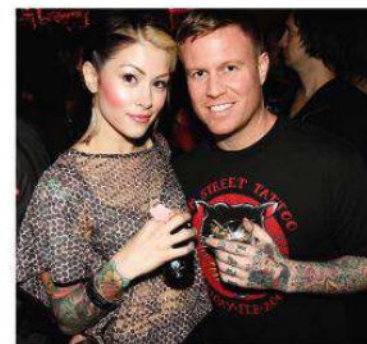
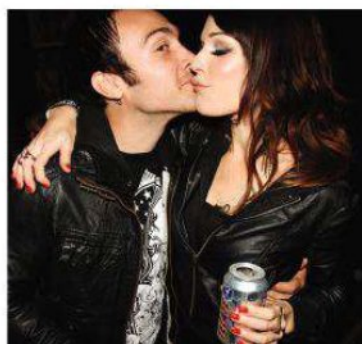
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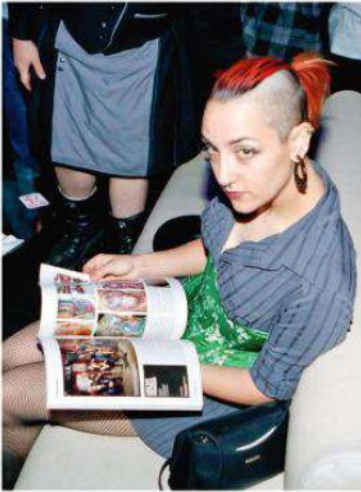
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# inked scene | EVENTS



**INKED AND IRON FIST MAGIC PARTY**  
 Love and magic were in the air the night after St. Valentine's Day when *Rock of Love* starlet Daisy de la Hoya helped us kick-up our Iron Fist party at the Palms' Ghost Bar. We were out in Vegas for Magic where we checked out new fashion, like Iron Fist's killer heels, and figured we'd show Sin City how we roll. For more photos go to [inkedmag.com](http://inkedmag.com).







TATTOOEDTV.COM PROUDLY PRESENTS



# ALPHABETICAL ORDER



DAYTON OHIO TATTOO ARTISTS JOSH COOK, JUSTIN WILSON, & JOE BRENNER

Having tattoos in this day and age is far less taboo than the old day. Days when you'd get nasty looks while shopping at a department store or supermarket, or you may receive comments like, "How can you get a job looking that way?" or maybe, "Why would you do that to yourself? Yuck!" Most of us heavily tattooed people have been there a time or two. Lucky for us, those days are fading fast. With tattooing all over the mainstream media as well as the number of tattooed people increasing everyday, snooty looks and comments like those are becoming things of the past. Nowadays, people of all walks of life are getting heavily tattooed. Even if some strawberry shortcake or square peg wanted to shoot an insult or dirty look your way, they usually keep their opinions to themselves because, let's face it, they're close to being outnumbered! Right?

We can thank God and the heavens for this. Not only for reasons of social tolerance, but for the growing business and opportunity in the tattoo industry. Things are on fire right now.

Tattooers are busier than ever, and the clients that are keeping them busy aren't getting the little tacky jammers of yesterday. They're getting real deal tattoos. Rib panels, half sleeves, or even full sleeves are the norm today. Of all the tattoos coming out of tattoo shops across the country, the one thing that gets tattooed more than anything is lettering. Yes, the letters of the alphabet make their way onto the hides of tattoo customers more than anything else, and when it comes to letters, Josh Cook, Joe Brenner, and Justin "Jaz" take them to the next level.

"It's about all I do." says Cook.  
 "Like pinstriping cars, I enjoy creating lettering with form and flow with a custom fit for the client." says Jaz.  
 "I got tired of seeing great tattoos with terrible lettering." says Joe.  
 "Most tattooers, even if they spend tons of time on a great design, when asked to add lettering, don't put in the same effort, resulting in a less attractive tattoo."  
 Not the case here. This tattoo power trio put out maximum effort every time, keeping their alphabetical order super straight!

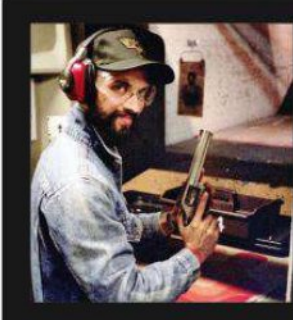
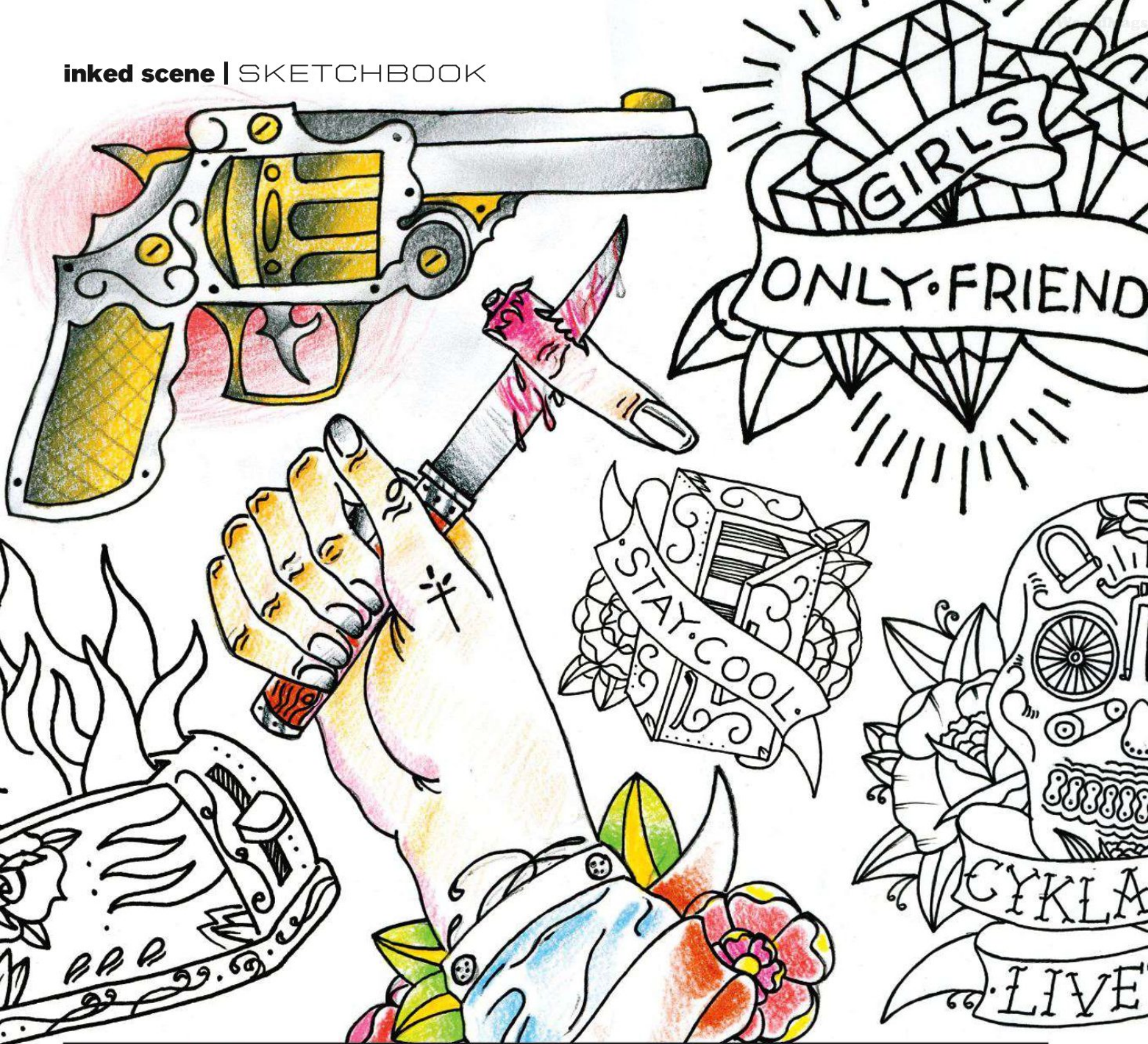


TATTOOS ABOVE : JOSH COOK

TATTOOS ABOVE : JUSTIN WILSON

TATTOOS ABOVE : JOE BRENNER

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## THOM GASTELUM

Fremont, 111 W. 7th St. #R1, Los Angeles, [thomgastelum.tumblr.com](http://thomgastelum.tumblr.com), [fremontapparelco.com](http://fremontapparelco.com)

Thom Gastelum works as a tattoo artist in the showroom of the apparel company Fremont. Unconventional? Yes, but so is Gastelum. "I attended art school in Pasadena at Art Center College of Design and studied in the illustration/fine art department," he says. "All while attending school I was getting tattooed. I would use student loan money—sorry, mum—to feed my addiction." He strives to create timeless and original tattoos. "I have a very vivid and obscure imagination," Gastelum says. "I think of a lot of random things and that directly translates into my personal work." When we asked Gastelum what he would design for his gravestone, he answered: "I don't think I want to be buried; cremate me and sprinkle my ashes in a mixture of oil paints."

TOM GASTELUM, CHRIS KLOSTERMAN

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